Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Terminal evaluation of the project "Dynamic Conservation and Sustainable Use of Agricultural Biodiversity to ensure Food Security and Ecosystems Services and Resiliency"

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Abstract

This is the report for the terminal evaluation of the project "Dynamic Conservation and Sustainable Use of Agricultural Biodiversity to ensure Food Security and Ecosystems Services and Resiliency" funded by the Global Environment Fund (GEF) and executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Key governmental institutions focused on environmental issues (Department of Environment and Natural Resources), agriculture (Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research) and cultural heritage (NCIP) were involved. The primary audience and users of this evaluation are: project governance and implementation bodies; national and local government counterparts; FAO divisions and Regional Offices; the GEF; and other donors, organizations and institutions.

The terminal evaluation was based around 31 evaluation questions and used the following as main sources of data collection: 1) an extensive desk review of all relevant documents and information; 2) semi-structured interviews with project stakeholders and focus group discussions at community level with sixty-one people taking part in these interviews and focus groups. Self-recorded audio-visual recordings, and story-telling examples were also contributed by community members. 3) For assessing policy change, an Outcome Harvesting approach was adopted by the evaluation team for interviews. All interviews were carried out remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The project was considered Moderately Satisfactory overall. The relevance of the project was Satisfactory, aligning strongly with FAO and GEF priorities and with Government of Philippines' national priorities. However, project design changes during implementation were based on untested assumptions and a weak diagnosis, and the technical design and expected results may not be fully relevant or appropriate in meeting agrobiodiversity needs. Effectiveness was found to be Moderately Satisfactory. There was impressive progress towards achieving policy objectives, with significant contributions to addressing the fragmentation of institutional structures crucial to the formulation and implementation of agrobiodiversity policies and laws. Limited contributions to enhancing and expanding dynamic conservation practices for agrobiodiversity in the three pilot communities have been made. Community seed banks, demonstration farms and farm machinery show limited functionality and limited farmer uptake. Efficiency was Moderately Unsatisfactory with limited gains on the pilot activities and concerns on the appropriateness of some choices made for key inputs. Sustainability is considered Moderately Likely with the gains in institutional arrangements, policy developments, and the effective convening of key stakeholders in agriculture, environment and culture from global, national, provincial and local levels. However, the lack of operational and financial viability of the enterprises, and the lack of utility and clear objectives of the community seed banks and demonstration farms pose significant sustainability risks to these gains being sustained. In environmental and social safeguards (ESS): the project did not mitigate the increased ESS risk as highlighted by the mid-term review and there was inadequate handling of safeguarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples for special measures to control, develop and protect their seeds, derivatives and associated indigenous knowledge.

The report provides five recommendations focused on addressing the ESS shortfalls and developing a successful exit strategy for the project, capturing and documenting experience effectively, and carrying out a systems review for future FAO supported agro-biodiversity projects that would help ensure appropriate design, technical support, oversight and meeting quality standards.

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The evaluation benefited from the input of many stakeholders. Foremost among them were the Indigenous Peoples of Hungduan and Hingyon, Ifugao and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato who were the primary beneficiaries of this project and whose insights and reflections proved invaluable. Inputs from other stakeholders, including government officers from national agencies to the local government, as well as personnel from FAO, other United Nations agencies, research centres, the private sector and independent consultants all provided critical contributions to the evaluation team's work.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing
BH	Budget Holder
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
ESS	environmental and social safeguards
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	farmer field school
FAO RAP	FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok)
FGD	focus group discussion
FLO	Funding Liaison Officer
FPIC	free, prior and informed consent
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIAHS	Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems
ICC/IP	Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
KII	key informant interview
LGU	Local Government Unit
LIAHS	Locally Important Agricultural Heritage System
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
LTU	Lead Technical Unit
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MEL	monitoring, evaluation and learning system
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MTA	Material Transfer Agreement
MTR	mid-term review
NCI	National Convergence Initiative
NIAHS	Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage System
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
OED	Office of Evaluation
PC	Programme Committee
PGRFA	plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
PhilRice	Philippine Rice Research Institute
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PMCU	Project Monitoring and Coordination Unit
POC	proof of concept
PPR	project progress report
PRODOC	project document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTF	Project Task Force
TOC	theory of change
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Executive summary

Introduction

1. This terminal evaluation of the project "Dynamic Conservation and Sustainable Use of Agricultural Biodiversity to ensure Food Security and Ecosystems Services and Resiliency" (GEF, 2015a) responds to accountability needs by comprehensively and systematically reporting on its performance. The evaluation assesses the design, implementation and achievement of the project's objectives. In addition, the terminal evaluation facilitates the synthesis of lessons for similar Global Environment Facility (GEF) thematic projects. Specifically, it weighs the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, factors affecting performance and cross-cutting issues related to equity, gender and social inclusion, as well as risk-related environmental and social safeguards (ESS).

2. The evaluation's scope includes the full 5-year project period from 2016 to December 2021, inclusive of the first budget neutral extension. The evaluation covers all project component aspects in all three pilot municipalities of the two provinces of Ifugao and South Cotabato in the Philippines.

3. The terminal evaluation was conducted in accordance with the guidance, rules and procedures established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the GEF. It followed the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) *Norms and standards for evaluation* and the GEF evaluation policy, while aligning with the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) project manual for decentralized offices and its methodological guidelines and practices. It adhered to the UNEG principles of independence, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethics, partnership, competencies and capacities, credibility and utility.

4. The evaluation used a mixed method for data gathering, collation, analysis and triangulation to combine diverse sources of information and tools. It conducted an extensive desk review for quantitative data gathering. The qualitative data gathering included virtual (via internet or telephone) and semi-structured key informant interview (KII) sessions with stakeholder representation. It also carried out virtual focus group discussion (FGD) sessions with farmer leaders and farmer beneficiaries from Hungduan and Hingyon, Ifugao and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato. Finally, the evaluation involved individual storytelling regarding the most significant change for the beneficiaries.

5. The policy analysis employed outcome harvesting and included the outcome description, its significance and the project's contribution to achievements. The technical aspects of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation and utilization, together with prospects for scaling up, were analysed based on assumptions of the project's theory of change (TOC) and capacity building.

6. Stakeholder engagement was analysed through stakeholder mapping and their role in the project, along with interlinkages among them. The evaluation adopted a consultative and transparent approach with internal and external stakeholders throughout a process that was participatory and inclusive, ensuring appropriate gender representation (around 75 percent of the participants were female) and diversity among farming and Indigenous Peoples.

Main findings

Relevance: Satisfactory

7. The project's objective regarding the dynamic conservation and use of critical agrobiodiversity is highly relevant and aligned with global, national and local policies and priorities. The project's objective and design align with GEF's biodiversity strategy, particularly the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources through farmer management and adaptation. It was designed to meet the needs of rural communities and Indigenous Peoples, especially women. However, project design changes during the course of implementation were based on untested assumptions and a weak diagnosis. As such, the technical design and expected results may not be fully relevant or appropriate in meeting the agrobiodiversity needs of men and women farmers, and the Indigenous communities.

Effectiveness: Moderately Satisfactory

8. The project has made impressive headway towards achieving its policy objectives. It has significantly contributed to addressing the fragmentation of institutional structures that are crucial to the formulation and implementation of agrobiodiversity policies and laws in the Philippines. The project has made progress in contributing to planning and governance mechanisms. However, it has made limited contributions to enhancing and expanding dynamic conservation practices for agrobiodiversity in the three pilot communities. The community seed banks, demonstration farms and farm machinery show limited functionality and limited farmer uptake. Likewise, the volume and sales of agrobiodiversity products have been rather low and have yet to indicate financial viability. The enterprises demonstrate a limited correlation to agrobiodiversity conservation. They do not show any link in promoting market-based incentives for the sustainability of agrobiodiversity and ecosystem conservation practices. The project has contributed to increased awareness and knowledge among policy makers, but public and consumer agrobiodiversity awareness has been minimal.

Efficiency: Moderately Unsatisfactory

9. While activities and spending are on track, project management lacks coherence in ensuring correlation of the quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of the outputs. Management of the project was largely driven by compliance with reporting and procurement requirements. Albeit important, the project has been unresponsive to some fundamental issues that affect its efficiency and effectiveness. The project management did not follow sensible steps to ensure that procured infrastructures and farm equipment were actually fit for purpose. Cost effectiveness is highly questionable given the committed budget of USD 13 701 955 with only 2 000 target beneficiaries. Aside from the achievements in policy and institutional formation, the objectives and added value of the pilot activities were insufficiently planned and did not materialize. There were no intended activities and outputs to analyse and model the proof of concept (POC) on the dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity.

Sustainability: Moderately Likely

10. There are very good prospects of sustaining project results at the policy level given the institutional arrangements. GEF's institutional and governance additionality lies in convening key stakeholders in agriculture, environment and culture from global, national,

provincial and local levels. However, the lack of operational and financial viability of the enterprises, the lack of utility and clear objectives of the community seed banks and demonstration farms – along with their continuous operation and maintenance – pose a significant sustainability risk to the infrastructures, interventions and pilots as a whole. Given the project's technical weakness, GEF's global environmental additionality has yet to be established.

Factors affecting performance: Moderately Unsatisfactory

11. There have been major system-level gaps in project design, implementation, execution and monitoring. FAO executed and supervised a highly technical and complex project without fundamental technical and social expertise. This created missed opportunities for adaptive management. For a complex and technical agrobiodiversity project, FAO did not leverage its institutional expertise on agrobiodiversity management.

12. Overall, the monitoring and evaluation systems regularly tracked activities, spending levels and certain outputs. This demonstrates major incoherence with the project's plans and results. In terms of monitoring implementation quality, there were significant gaps in FAO's supervision and technical backstopping at systems level. The project's weak technical performance seems to have gone unnoticed. There was no critical reflection based on monitoring data that could have led to adaptation or a change in project activities.

13. In terms of implementation quality, there were major supervision gaps from FAO Philippines and the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. It is unclear how some project design and implementation changes were duly communicated and approved. Supervision was also unclear. There is no reference on quality standards to ensure good technical performance and results.

14. In terms of execution quality, activities related to contracts and procurements, approval and launch were done relatively well. Despite the challenges and limitations of COVID-19, the project adapted reasonably well.

15. As of October 2021, co-financing delivered 47.65 percent of what was committed, mostly in-kind, as part of regular programming and budget allocations of partner national government agencies and local government units (LGUs). The co-financing, estimated at almost USD 5.5 million has doubled that of the GEF grant at USD 2.1 million. This is an indication of the leveraging power of FAO and the project, as well as the commitment by the Government of the Philippines to support to agrobiodiversity. Nevertheless, about 50 percent of the co-financing did not materialize as government agencies had to prioritize their response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

16. Largely, project partnership and stakeholder engagement have been satisfactory in establishing a multi-institutional partnership and collaboration among key stakeholders, including civil society organizations and the private seed industry. The project engaged with diverse institutional actors at the national and local levels. In these processes, key institutional actors were also motivated to support enabling policies. The project contributed to the integration and synergy of key policy frameworks and laws that fall under the sectors of agriculture, environment and natural resources, Indigenous Peoples, cultural heritage and local governance.

17. The project's knowledge management has been moderately unsatisfactory. First, the project does not have a system in place to track fundamental project data, which not only informs performance but also serves as a prerequisite for the development of knowledge products. Eventually, it also provides evidence if the proposed TOC works. Second, the three main components of the project lack coherence on the proper functioning of knowledge management. The policy component was not substantially informed by on-the-ground experiences from the technical component. In addition, communications produced inadequate technical reports, policy briefs and published articles that could have provided the project with a much-needed technical peer review and solid basis for public awareness raising. Third, despite considerable budget allocation on capacity building, including module developments, the delivered outputs merely reflected training outlines – with the exception of school curricula for formal education. These are inadequate as reference training materials and cannot be used for successive trainings by the project stakeholders. Further, it did not contribute to public goods for similar FAO and GEF undertakings. Fourth, there has been minimal reflection and analysis on the project's technical progress and on how the pilots need major reshaping to form substantive and scalable models that respond to the project's core objectives. As such, there are not many knowledge products that can serve as guides for scaling up. Fifth, except for a few publications, the project does not have a system to capture, test, share and act on lessons learned. Sixth, there is neither a link nor mutual reinforcements between knowledge management and communications. Seventh, FAO did not leverage its technical expertise and considerable knowledge products on agrobiodiversity to guide the project's knowledge management.

Gender and cross-cutting issues: Moderately Unsatisfactory

18. To a considerable extent, gender and social inclusion were part of the project design and implementation. The target beneficiaries are all from Indigenous groups and are largely women. The Indigenous Peoples and the women were well represented in the participant selection and in leadership. Further, the youth were actively engaged in the project through the inclusion of agrobiodiversity awareness in school curricula. The achievements in improving self-confidence and self-worth among the women are important steps towards defining a transformative agenda that addresses gender and social inclusion in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Deeper analysis reveals that there were still limitations in social inclusivity, such as a limited number of Indigenous Peoples engaged in the project, the absence of a gender analysis to inform gender-appropriate interventions and limited inclusion of indigenous knowledge and practices in field interventions. The project had major gaps in free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) compliance relating to the collective rights of the Indigenous Peoples to their plant materials and underlying indigenous knowledge.

19. There was a systemic weakness in assessing, monitoring and addressing ESS-associated risks. The original 2015 ESS was wrongly categorized as low risk. When the 2019 mid-term review (MTR) raised the risk (ESS 2) from low to medium, the Project Monitoring and Coordination Unit (PMCU), Budget Holder (BH), Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and Funding Liaison Officer (FLO) did not appear to acknowledge or understand the risk. They have not taken steps to address the ESS. Since then, and at the time of evaluation, the risk has escalated in the view of the evaluators. The high ESS risk concerns the following: (i) lack of provisions for the project to externally collect, store, characterize and register samples of plant genetic resources of indigenous and endemic varieties of crops grown by Indigenous Peoples and their associated traditional knowledge; (ii) lack of Access and Benefit Sharing

(ABS) provisions for the Indigenous communities; (iii) possible violation of the FPIC Memorandum of Agreement (MOA); and (iv) possible non-compliance of the project's legal and moral obligations under international agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997.

20. In terms of progress towards achieving the development objectives, the project's policy outcomes are moderately satisfactory. The policy work was impressive with good prospects of governmental approval. However, the technical and communications outcomes show major weaknesses. The policy, technical and communications components have weak linkages in providing a POC for the TOC and towards achieving impact. The project has gained substantial ground in institutional formation and policy engagement towards the establishments of Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (NIAHS) and Locally Important Agricultural Heritage Sites (LIAHS). However, the project needs evidence-based models and credible tools to advocate for policy change and to implement agrobiodiversity conservation and use. The meagre results from the field and technical interventions greatly restrict the project's impact.

21. The overall progress on implementation is moderately satisfactory. The project produced well-crafted policy proposals. It reported a 92 percent completion of its outputs with mixed results, particularly on the quality of the technical and communications outputs and outcomes. While activities and spending are on track, the project management lacks coherence in ensuring correlation of the quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of the activities and outputs.

22. The overall likelihood of risk to sustainability is moderately likely. The policy component shows signs of sustainability, but the weak technical component is a risk. This includes inadequate measures to safeguard the rights of Indigenous Peoples over their plant genetic resources. The ESS is unsatisfactory.

Conclusion

Conclusion 1. Relevance: the project's multi-institutional and multilevel approach to conserve globally important agrobiodiversity within protected areas and agricultural heritage sites remains highly relevant and innovative. The project design to address institutional fragmentation in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use enabled the effective policy engagement of stakeholders from national, regional and local levels. At the same time, the project was gravely challenged by the complexities of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use, which required technical and social rigour in the project design and its adaptation.

Conclusion 2. Effectiveness: the project played a catalytic role by enabling and contributing to multi-institutional and multilevel agrobiodiversity policy processes, laws and outcomes, delivering significantly on GEF's institutional and governance additionality. In contrast, there were meagre results from the ground-level pilot interventions. Hence, the promising institutional prospects of scaling up are restricted by the lack of scalable technical outputs and knowledge products (e.g. tools, models and training modules) that could demonstrate and uphold further commitments and investments beyond the project areas. In this regard, GEF's global environmental benefits have been limited.

Conclusion 3. Effectiveness: the Indigenous Peoples' traditional production systems underwent a transformation towards duality, that is, they adopted both traditional and modern varieties for their livelihood strategy. The project did not consider this in an appropriate way. The project's conservation and use tactic was restricted to storing and planting varieties, but the more strategic aspects were not integrated. These included: (i) conserving genes through varietal improvement and climate change adaptation; (ii) supporting smallholder farming systems with their multiple rationale, complex agrobiodiversity management and plant gene evolution; and (iii) a policy-technical work balance to strengthen the systems that maintain and create diversity for climate resilient food and agriculture.

Conclusion 4. Effectiveness: the project achieved considerable headway in raising awareness of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use among policy makers from national to local levels, as well as in schools at the provincial level. In contrast, very little was achieved in raising public and consumer awareness of the importance of agrobiodiversity and the need for their conservation and sustainable use.

Conclusion 5. Effectiveness: FAO did not leverage its technical expertise on agrobiodiversity management. Therefore, the technical quality of the project design and implementation, and its outputs and outcomes, were substantially affected. Its prospects for scaling up are restricted. Moreover, the project's innovative concept that linked agrobiodiversity conservation at genetic and farm-to-landscape levels was not utilized towards the global environmental additionality for the GEF.

Conclusion 6. Efficiency: project management was mainly driven by compliance in reporting and procurement. There was no system to ensure that activities and outputs were fit for purpose and were of quality, timely and cost-effective. The project team lacked the crucial guidance and support of experts in the technical and social aspects of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. This was a major and systemic omission for a complex and large-scale agrobiodiversity project with the Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICC/IP).

Conclusion 7. Sustainability: overall, the prospects of sustaining the project are mixed. On the one hand, there are very good prospects at the policy and institutional levels, some prospects on the financial front, and certain prospects in terms of the cultural and social aspects. On the other hand, the lack of financial viability of the enterprises, plus the lack of utility of the community seed banks and demonstration farms, pose significant risks to the sustainability of these infrastructures and the pilots as a whole. While there is a strong sense of ownership and commitment from the project beneficiaries, specifically Indigenous women, the number of beneficiaries has been very small.

Conclusion 8. Factors affecting performance: the project's performance was greatly enhanced by its partnership and stakeholder engagement, which generated reasonable co-financing and significant policy expertise and political will. The convening power of FAO facilitated the multi-institutional collaboration on policy work and institutional formation. However, there have been systemic gaps in factors affecting performance such as weak monitoring and knowledge management.

Conclusion 9. Cross-cutting issues: the project took on gender and social inclusion by deliberately facilitating the participation and leadership of Indigenous Peoples, particularly women. The project has been gender and age inclusive with target women and youth beneficiaries from Indigenous groups. The achievements in improving the self-confidence and self-worth of the women are important steps towards defining a transformative agenda that could address gender and social inclusion in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. More could have been achieved if the project's agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use objective was systematically informed by women's needs and trait preferences, as well as by leveraging Indigenous Peoples'

knowledge. Women's profile and vulnerability assessments were not carried out to specifically meet the project's interventions.

Conclusion 10. Environmental and social safeguards (ESS): the project did not mitigate the increased ESS risk as highlighted by the MTR. There was inadequacy in safeguarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples for special measures to control, develop and protect their seeds, derivatives and associated indigenous knowledge. The project may have impinged on the FPIC MOA with the ICC/IP for the *ex situ* collection, storage, characterization and registration of samples of indigenous and endemic varieties.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Top priority (ESS risk): to address the project's unsatisfactory performance related to the increased ESS risk and possible major gaps in the FPIC MOA, the evaluation recommends the following top priority. FAO Philippines as the Budget Holder (BH), and the PMCU, should immediately undertake a consultation process with the ICC/IP of Hungduan and Hingyon, Ifugao and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato to formulate equitable actions with the necessary provisions within three months. The project should develop a plan with a timetable that includes measures for cease and disclosure, address and redress, coordination and support.

Recommendation 2. Quality delivery of knowledge products: a substantial budget has been allocated to knowledge products, which could be used as tools to help sustain project results and serve as potential public goods. The evaluation recommends delivering committed knowledge products as finished products to the project stakeholders, particularly the ICC/IP and the LGUs by the end of project closure. This particularly relates to training materials and policy briefs.

Recommendation 3. Exit strategy, policy work: to ensure that the achievements in policy and institutional formation are sustained and enabled throughout various policy approval processes, the evaluation recommends that FAO Philippines and the PMCU develop, in coordination with the Department of Agriculture's Under Secretary of Operations, an exit strategy that includes: (i) mapping out the succeeding policy processes for the approval and implementation of the seed act, the LIAHS and the NIAHS, and agreeing upon a course of action; (ii) making provisions to ensure that the project's policy progress is reported to and reflected in the Government of the Philippines' compliance with the *Philippine biodiversity strategy and action plan 2015–2028* regarding CBD (Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, 2016a); and (iii) liaising with and supporting the Philippine national focal point, and reporting project achievements as part of the government's compliance with the ITPGRFA.

Recommendation 4. Exit strategy, pilot activities: considering the challenges on the functionality and sustainability of community seed banks, demonstration farms, farm equipment and agrobiodiversity enterprises, as well as recognizing that the project has officially transferred the community seed banks to the LGUs, the evaluation recommends an exit strategy before the end of the project period. This includes the following actions: (i) the PMCU should communicate clearly to the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the ICC/IP, the LGU and the communities that the project definitely ends in June 2022, and discuss and document lessons learned, including sharing the results of the evaluation with the communities and across communities; (ii) the PMCU should hold a consultative dialogue with the 17 pilot communities and the respective NCIP, ICC/IP and LGUs on the viability, functionality and maintenance of the community seed banks, demonstration farms, farm equipment and the agrobiodiversity enterprises to assess what should be maintained or changed; and (iii) for the livelihoods enterprise, it should facilitate linkages with the existing social enterprises or related LGU projects to gather continued, appropriate support for the involved community members.

Recommendation 5. To FAO and the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit: considering that a system weakness is a major factor that has negatively affected the project's performance, this evaluation recommends that FAO conduct a systems review for GEF projects on agrobiodiversity. FAO should focus on ensuring the delivery of a coherent project design, the provision of technical competence, project overview and supervision, compliance with quality standards, a responsive monitoring, evaluation and learning system (MEL) and outcome delivery for GEF projects. Along with improvements in future projects, this would further advance FAO's added value in the technical and institutional innovation related to agrobiodiversity management as it relates to FAO's Strategic Framework and the GEF's policies and objectives.

Global Environment Facility rating table

Executive Summary Table 1. GEF criteria, rating and summary comments

GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating[i]	Summary comments[ii]
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	Satisfactory	The project objective and design were highly innovative and addressed the institutional fragmentation of agrobiodiversity conservation and use. The project did not pursue its landscape approach and therefore missed opportunities for a more integrated and holistic perspective.
A1.1. Alignment with FAO and GEF strategic priorities	Moderately Satisfactory	The project is fully aligned with GEF and FAO strategic priorities. Climate change as a major threat to agrobiodiversity and food systems was not adequately addressed.
A1.2. Relevance to national, regional and global priorities, and beneficiary needs	Moderately Satisfactory	The project is highly relevant to global and national priorities, as well as the needs of the beneficiaries. The number and extent of target beneficiaries were disproportionately low compared to the budget. The design did not include deliberate outreach to the wider community members.
A1.3. Complementarity with existing interventions	Satisfactory	The project complements existing interventions. Knowledge sharing with existing interventions was inadequate.
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	Moderately Satisfactory	The policy and institutional results were good. There were major weaknesses in the technical and community interventions, as well as challenges in communications.
B1.1. Delivery of project outputs	Moderately Satisfactory	The project produced well-crafted policy proposals. The project reported a 92 percent completion of its outputs with mixed results, particularly on the quality of the technical and communications outputs and results.
B1.2. Progress towards outcomes[iii] and project objectives	Moderately Satisfactory	The project's policy outcomes were impressive with good prospects of governmental approval. The technical and communications outcomes show major weaknesses. The policy, technical and communications components have weak linkages in providing a POC for the TOC and towards achieving impact.
- Outcome 1	Satisfactory	Good policy processes, institutional engagements and outcomes were achieved. There were shortcomings in articulating and realizing Indigenous Peoples' rights to representation and for them to co-create policies that align with their customary laws and practices.
- Outcome 2	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The project made good progress on mainstreaming agrobiodiversity in government planning and with budget allocations. The outcome of technical and livelihood interventions is too meagre to model and mainstream a dynamic approach to agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use in traditional ecosystems.
- Outcome 3	Moderately Satisfactory	The outcome of communications and outreach was promising for policy makers and students. Consumer and public awareness was weak, and knowledge products for mainstreaming were few and of mixed quality.
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives and outcomes	Moderately Satisfactory	The conditions for scaling up the policy component are good with areas for improvement, whereas the technical component is weak.

GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating[i]	Summary comments[ii]
B1.3. Likelihood of impact	Moderately Satisfactory	The project gained substantial ground in institutional formation and policy engagement towards the establishment of the NIAHS and the LIAHS. The project needs evidence-based models and credible tools to advocate for policy changes, as well as implement agrobiodiversity conservation and use in traditional ecosystems. The meagre results of the actual field implementation of agrobiodiversity conservation and use with Indigenous Peoples in their communities (specifically community seed banks, demonstration farms, farmer field school [FFS] modules, trainings, farm production support and enterprises) substantially restricted the progress towards impact.
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency[iv]	Moderately Unsatisfactory	FAO, as the BH, provided reasonably efficient operational, administrative and financial management support considering the number of stakeholders and institutions involved in the project. There were delays in procurement and a mismatch between actual community needs and the support provided. The cost effectiveness is questionable because the logical chronology of activities is problematic.
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	Moderately Likely	The policy component is likely sustainable, but the weak technical component is a risk. This includes inadequate measures to safeguard the rights of Indigenous Peoples over their plant genetic resources.
D1.1. Financial risks	Moderately Likely	The LGUs have allocated a budget for key project activities with some supportive policy instruments. The impending change in government due to the Philippine elections in May 2022 may alter commitments. This is beyond the control of the project.
D1.2. Sociopolitical risks	Unlikely	There was inadequacy in safeguarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples for special measures to control, develop and protect their plant genetic resources, seeds, derivatives and associated indigenous knowledge.
D1.3. Institutional and governance risks	Moderately Likely	There is good ownership of the project. Future project building would require expansion of its beneficiary coverage to avoid the potential risk of elite capture.
D1.4. Environmental risks	Unlikely	There were inadequate results and measures in place to ensure Indigenous Peoples' conservation and sustainable use of their plant genetic resources in their ancestral domains.
D2. Catalysis and replication	Moderately Unlikely	The policy work, with institutional formation, can progress towards approval and implementation with time. The technical work produced limited viable products for sustainability.
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness[v]	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The project design did not provide for the technical feasibility of the community seed banks and other field interventions within the broader seed systems and conservation needs of the communities. Financial feasibility and a business model for the enterprises were lacking. The project did not have the necessary agrobiodiversity expertise, while communications expertise was neither resourced nor leveraged well.
E2. Quality of project implementation	Moderately Unsatisfactory	There have been major supervisory gaps from FAO Philippines as the executing agency. The strategic overview and guidance for project direction, especially the technical component, were weak.

GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating[i]	Summary comments[ii]
E2.1. Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, Project Task Force [PTF], etc.)	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The project lacked supervision on quality standards. It is unclear if key changes or omissions in the project plan were duly approved. FAO did not leverage its technical expertise on agrobiodiversity and Indigenous Peoples to ensure quality implementation.
E2.2. Project oversight (Project Steering Committee [PSC], project working group, etc.)	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The technical weaknesses of the project and the ESS risks were overlooked and not addressed.
E3. Quality of project execution For projects being managed under Direct Execution Modality – DEX: PMCU/BH For Operational Partners Implementation Modality projects: executing agency	Moderately Satisfactory	The activities related to contracts and procurements, approval and launch were compliant. Despite the challenges and limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project adapted reasonably well.
E4. Financial management and co-financing	Moderately Satisfactory	Financial management is relatively on track. Co-financing has only been above 47 percent as of November 2021 due to the government's need to re-allocate funding for the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as changes in leadership and priorities among the different agencies.
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	Satisfactory	The project's institutional formation and coordinating committees from national, provincial and local levels were catalytic in successfully achieving policy objectives and building a strong sense of ownership among all stakeholders. There were gaps in the engagement with Indigenous Peoples (see ESS), but the evaluation also recognizes that the project revived farmer groups and contributed to building their agency.
E6. Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products	Moderately Unsatisfactory	There is no system in place to identify, develop, use or share knowledge products. The number of outputs has been low, and the quality has been mixed. Knowledge management is weak.
E7. Overall quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Monitoring is driven by compliance rather than results. Major technical weaknesses of the project, while flagged in the technical working group, were not identified and were left unaddressed by the PSC, the PMCU and the LTO.
E7.1. M&E design	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The indicators are largely based on activity with little correlation to quality.
E7.2. M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The system regularly kept track of the activities, spending levels and some outputs. Implementation monitoring is largely incoherent with project plans and results delivery.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	Moderately Unsatisfactory	There has been major oversight at systems level. The consistently low technical performance of the project was never flagged and was left unaddressed. Report approvals were provided with no regard to the lack of technical data. FAO implemented and executed a highly technical project without the fundamental technical expertise and neither identified nor acted on ESS risks.
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Indigenous Peoples, especially women, were actively engaged as project participants and leaders. The training materials and project monitoring did not include a gender analysis. The project had major gaps in FPIC compliance relating to the Indigenous Peoples'

GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating[i]	Summary comments[ii]
		collective rights to their plant materials and underlying indigenous knowledge.
F2. Human rights issues/Indigenous Peoples	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The Indigenous Peoples were actively engaged in the project as members and leaders. Some of the project activities could jeopardize the Indigenous Peoples' collective rights to their plant materials and underlying indigenous knowledge.
F2. ESS	Unsatisfactory	At first, the ESS risks were wrongly classified as low. The MTR raised such assessment to medium. The evaluation notes that this issue was not attended to and flags that the actual risk has risen to high. The project had major gaps in FPIC compliance relating to the Indigenous Peoples' collective rights to their plant materials and underlying indigenous knowledge.
Overall project rating	**Moderately Satisfactory**	

Notes: [i] See rating scheme at the end of this document (Appendix 3).

[ii] Includes reference to the relevant sections in the report.

[iii] Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

[iv] This includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

[v] This refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners upon launch.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

1. The GEF monitoring & evaluation policy 2010 (GEF IEO, 2010) specifies that each full-sized Global Environment Facility (GEF) project1 is to be evaluated at the end of implementation. This terminal evaluation responds to accountability needs by providing a comprehensive and systematic account of the project's design, implementation, achievement of objectives and overall performance. GEF's additionality is assessed for its contribution to global environmental benefits, institutions and governance. In addition, the terminal evaluation facilitates the synthesis of lessons for similar thematic GEF projects. Specifically, this terminal evaluation assessed the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, factors affecting performance and cross-cutting issues related to equity, gender and social inclusion, as well as environmental and social safeguards (ESS).

1.2 Intended users

2. The primary intended users of this project evaluation include the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit, personnel and other stakeholders who would be expected to consider the findings and outcomes, and use these to account for the investment and shape future initiatives in the sector. Table 1 outlines secondary users with a potential interest in the evaluation's findings.

3. The Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, as the lead coordinating agency, is an important user of the evaluation. Secondary users include the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry, the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute, the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau and the local government units (LGUs) of Ifugao and South Cotabato at provincial, municipal and barangay levels. Further key users of the evaluation findings and recommendations are the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICC/IP) of the 17 barangays that are directly involved in the project. For the ICC/IP, the evaluation summary needs to be translated into local languages and discussed accordingly.

[1] This involves GEF project financing of more than USD 2 million.

Table 1. Intended evaluation users and their interest in the evaluation results

Primary users		**Interest in evaluation findings**
FAO, including the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit	Budget Holder (BH), Project Monitoring and Coordination Unit (PMCU), Lead Technical Officer (LTO), Funding Liaison Officer (FLO) and other members of the Project Task Force (PTF)	Provision of insights and learning for future projects Use for responding to the information needs and interests of policy makers and other actors with a decision-making role
	Other members of the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit, project design team	Programme improvement and organization development, making use of valuable information for managers or others responsible for programme operations and the design of future initiatives Supporting accountability for GEF funds
	Office of Evaluation (OED)	Evaluation methodology and design of future evaluations
Secondary users		**Interest in evaluation findings**
GEF	Secretariat Evaluation Office	Provision of insights and learnings for future project evaluations and investments
Government	Government departments, agencies and LGUs	Provision of insights and learnings for future investments, scale-up decisions and policy development
Partner organizations	Partners active in this sector	Provision of insights and learnings for future initiatives and advocacy work
ICC/IP	Partner communities active in this sector	Provision of insights and learnings for future initiatives
Other donors	Donors active in this sector	Provision of insights and learnings for possible future investments
Academia, networks and sectoral experts	Institutional and individual experts	Provision of insights and learnings for wider research and advocacy work

Source: FAO. 2022. Evaluation Terms of Reference.

1.3 Scope and objectives of the evaluation

4. The scope of the evaluation includes:

   i. the full 5-year period of the project from 2016 to December 2021, inclusive of the first budget neutral extension;
   ii. all aspects of the project components;
   iii. a geographic focus on progress in all three pilot municipalities in the two provinces of Ifugao and South Cotabato; and
   iv. engagement with a sample of informants drawn from key stakeholder groups, as outlined in Table 1.

5. The specific evaluation objectives are:

   i. to examine the extent to which the project achieved its stated objectives and outcomes;
   ii. to provide an assessment of the project's performance and cross-cutting dimensions, as well as the implementation of planned project activities and planned outputs against actual results;

iii. to determine the likelihood of progress in agrobiodiversity being sustained due to contributions from the project's interventions;
iv. to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project;
v. to understand both the critical enablers for progress and the barriers to progress for project components and activities; and
vi. to synthesize lessons learned that may help sustain project interventions upon completion and assist the design and implementation of future FAO and FAO-GEF agrobiodiversity-related initiatives.

Table 2. Evaluation questions by GEF criteria

GEF criteria	Evaluation questions
Relevance	To what extent have the project's objectives and intervention design been consistent with those of the Government of the Philippines, local communities and Indigenous Peoples' priorities and policies; to the GEF's strategic priorities and objectives, FAO's strategic programmes, and add value to the dynamic conservation and use of critical agrobiodiversity, including global environmental benefits?
Effectiveness, achievement of project results	To what extent have the project's objectives been achieved and were there any unintended results? How have the results demonstrated the project's contribution to the dynamic conservation and use of critical agrobiodiversity?
Efficiency, project implementation and execution	To what extent has the project been successful in using available resources (funds, personnel, expertise, equipment, etc.) to deliver results in the timeliest and least costly way possible?
Sustainability	What are the prospects for sustaining the results beyond the project's closure? In particular, what systems are in place to environmentally, institutionally, financially, politically, culturally and socially sustain key activities? What is the prospect for scaling up the activities?
Factors affecting performance	What are the factors that facilitated and hindered the effectiveness of the project, including: monitoring and evaluation, quality of implementation, quality of execution, financial management and mobilization of co-financing, project partnership and stakeholder engagement, knowledge management, communications, public awareness and progress to impact?
Cross-cutting issues	To what extent have equity, gender and social inclusion, including Indigenous Peoples (IP) been taken in account in the design and implementation of the project? To what extent has the project taken environmental and social concerns into consideration in its design and implementation (is the project in line with its Environmental and Social Safeguards plan)?
Additionality	What can be concluded on the added value of project interventions compared to comparable alternatives?

Note: See Appendix 7 for the full evaluation matrix on evaluation questions and sub-questions, indicators and information sources.
Source: FAO. 2022. Evaluation Terms of Reference.

1.4 Methodology

6. The terminal evaluation followed the guidance, rules and procedures established by FAO and the GEF. It adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) *Norms and standards for evaluation* (UNEG, 2016) and the *GEF Evaluation policy* (GEF IEO, 2019) and formats. Further, it aligned with the FAO OED project evaluation manual for decentralized offices, and its methodological guidelines and practices. It met the UNEG principles of independence, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethics, partnership, competencies and capacities, credibility and utility.

7. The evaluation team is independent from any organizations that have been involved in designing, executing or advising any aspect of the project that is the subject of this evaluation. The evaluation had a team leader and a team member. They have a combined expertise in gender and socially inclusive agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use at the local, national and international levels among farmers and Indigenous Peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This involves related policy and legislative matters, stakeholder engagements, capacity development, community organizing, enterprise development, knowledge management, advocacy, public and consumer awareness raising, and the monitoring, evaluation and learning system (MEL). In addition, the evaluation team has a combined expertise in multistakeholder agrobiodiversity programme management, research, methodological development and scaling out (see Appendix 11). The team leader has led the evaluation of large-scale and complex programmes on agrobiodiversity, agricultural research for development, climate change, disaster risk reduction and agrarian reform. The evaluation team was supported by an evaluation manager from FAO's Office of Evaluation (OED).

8. The evaluation adopted a consultative and transparent approach with internal and external stakeholders throughout the process. It also followed a participatory and inclusive process to ensure appropriate gender representation and diversity among farmers and Indigenous Peoples.

Table 3. Stakeholder groups and their role in the project and interest in the terminal evaluation

Stakeholder group	Role in the project	Assumed involvement/interest in the evaluation
PTF, including LTO, FLO and BH PMCU	The project team is responsible for project monitoring. It provides technical backstopping and support. The BH is the overall manager for the project and is accountable for its performance. They are responsible for project management, implementation, administration and supervision, including project technical oversight, reporting, monitoring and knowledge management.	The LTO and the FLO provide supervision and support the BH in implementing the evaluation. The BH is responsible for initiating the evaluation, approving the terms of reference (TOR), ensuring support for the evaluation team, and leading the management response process.
FAO-GEF Coordination Unit	The project funder is responsible for project monitoring and knowledge management.[2]	Provides inputs to the evaluation, receives evaluation briefings, approves the management response to the evaluation and ensures recommendation follow up. Also provides guidance on the latest GEF policy related to evaluations and submits the final report to the GEF Secretariat and the GEF Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Feeds lessons learned from evaluations into annual reporting.

[2] Please note that the FLO is also part of this unit.

Stakeholder group	Role in the project	Assumed involvement/interest in the evaluation
Department of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research and the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry programmes	The lead coordinating agency implements and provides staff with project activity time (e.g. policy and training inputs).	Provides evaluation feedback, receives evaluation briefings, coordinates the formulation of the management response to the evaluation, approves the management response to the evaluation and dictates how project materials are used in compliance with international instruments (International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture [ITPGRFA], Convention on Biological Diversity [CBD]).
Other national government agencies (Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Agrarian Reform, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, NCIP, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Department of Education and PhilRice)	Provide technical and policy guidance and inputs to project activities. The Department of Education is only at the provincial level.	Provide feedback on project implementation, especially Components 1 and 2, as well as synergy on agrobiodiversity with national programmes and the agency mandate. Develop how project materials are used in compliance with international instruments (ITPGRFA, CBD).
LGU	Provides operational support via staff time, training, use of facilities, counterpart funding of the project and policy formulation. Serves as a conduit for farmers' agrobiodiversity knowledge.	Provides feedback on project implementation and synergy of agrobiodiversity with local government plans and programmes, while contributing to the local landscape and agricultural ecosystem.
Indigenous Peoples, farmers and local communities	These project beneficiaries participate in local project governance and share technical inputs.	Provide feedback on project implementation plus consultation on the relevance of the project results to their culture, livelihood, landscape, agricultural ecosystem, climate and the COVID-19 pandemic.
Academia	Conducts research, documentation and training on agrobiodiversity management.	Provides feedback on project implementation, especially Component 2. Provides inputs on complementarity of the project in their programme.
Civil society organizations	As part of project implementation, they are conduits for farmers' agrobiodiversity management.	Provide feedback on project implementation, especially Components 2 and 3. Also provide inputs on how to ensure project results are relevant to farmers and seek complementarity in their programmes.
Wholesalers, retailers and consumers	These are end users or market outlets of farmers' agrobiodiversity.	Provide feedback on project implementation, especially Component 3. Provide inputs on how project results fared on the market.

Source: FAO. 2022. Evaluation Terms of Reference.

9. The evaluation used a mixed method for data gathering, collation, analysis and triangulation, combining a diverse source of information and tools as follows:

   i. Virtual (through internet or phone) semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders using key informant interview (KII) sessions. The key informants were selected to represent the various stakeholder groups in project implementation. Policy and legal experts who were not part of the project were interviewed for their counterfactual thinking and to help validate information and data interpretation.
   ii. Virtual focus group discussion (FGD) sessions with farmer leaders and farmer beneficiaries from Hungduan and Hingyon, Ifugao and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato were set up with support from the project team. At least five community leaders, chieftains or organization leaders from each of the three pilot municipalities that represent different Indigenous Peoples were invited. Of the 13 leaders who came from different barangays, organizations and Indigenous communities, 75 percent were women. All of them are leaders of the organizations that have been either established or strengthened by the project. For the farmer beneficiary FGD, three to five farmers were invited to ensure a gender and age balance. All 14 participants were women farmers who came from diverse Indigenous groups.
   iii. Storytelling involved a process referred to as the Most Significant Change Technique. At least five project beneficiaries from each Indigenous group, ensuring gender and age representation, were invited to share successful or challenging cases. The evaluators and the project team noted that this worked mostly with the Tuwalis in Ifugao, and with the T'boli and Ubo in South Cotabato. Of the 21 farmer beneficiaries who provided their stories, 80 percent of the respondents were Indigenous women. Some of the FGD respondents were also storytellers.

10. For data collation and analysis:

   i. For qualitative data gathering, the evaluation team conducted an extensive desk review, virtual semi-structured interviews and storytelling using simple, self-recorded audio-visual recordings or written text by men, women and youth from the ICC/IP.
   ii. For quantitative data gathering, project scoping and market studies, design, inception, progress and financial reports, policy outputs, mid-term review (MTR) and project tools (e.g. MEL framework, farmer field school [FFS] curriculum) and other relevant project documents were reviewed. The evaluation was dependent on the availability and quality of quantitative data, including gender-disaggregated quantitative data from the project.
   iii. For policy outputs and outcomes, the evaluation collated and analysed the specific text input and proposal of the project. This was then compared to the original and revised policy text as published on government websites. Policy developments were also noted. In addition, the evaluation reviewed the project's activities and stakeholder engagement, including consultation processes leading to policy outcomes. The analysis employed outcome harvesting (for more information, please refer to Better Evaluation, n.d., in the bibliography) with a description of the outcome and its significance, the project's contribution to the achievements, and comments from the evaluators.

iv. For specific agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use, the evaluation was dependent on the availability and quality of technical data and information on the project. The evaluation assessed the rationale, objectives, outputs and outcomes of the technical interventions, such as the community seed banks, demonstration farms, enterprises and capacity development. The technical aspects of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation and utilization, including prospects for scaling up, were analysed based on the assumptions of the project's theory of change (TOC), including capacity building.

v. Stakeholder engagement was analysed by stakeholder mapping and their roles in the project, along with interlinkages among stakeholders. This was used to provide insights into governance structures for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity.

vi. Beneficiary perspectives were sampled and analysed at group and individual levels by focusing on the most significant change to their environment, institutions and livelihoods. An important selection criterion for the respondents was the participation of at least 50 percent women and at least 70 percent Indigenous Peoples. The data analysis was disaggregated accordingly.

vii. For lessons learned, the evaluation team used the findings and identified lessons based on the following criteria: (i) concisely captured the context from which it was derived; (ii) potentially applicable to a different context; (iii) considered a clear application domain; and (iv) guides action (UNFCCC Least Developed Countries Expert Group, 2015).

viii. Secondary project documents and primary sources based on the interviews were compared. Such a comparison encompassed the multiple perspectives of national and local stakeholders, as well as some counterfactual conditionals by experts in agrobiodiversity policy and law who were not engaged in the project. In this way, the data and findings were rigorously triangulated.

x. The first virtual presentation was held with the Project Monitoring and Coordination Unit (PMCU) and FAO Philippines in order to discuss the initial evaluation findings. A second virtual presentation was conducted to discuss the ESS risks with the PMCU, FAO Philippines, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO RAP), the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit, OED, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) Secretariat and the FAO Indigenous Peoples Unit. The full draft report was circulated for comments among all of these stakeholders, including the Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and Funding Liaison Officer (FLO).

xi. See Appendix 7 for the evaluation matrix and details on the data sources that contributed to each question and sub-question.

1.5 Limitations

11. Field visits and face-to-face interviews were not feasible due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 cases and site-specific lockdown policies. For field visits, the evaluators needed to factor in pre- and post-isolation and testing days to ensure good practice, less than four hours inside a closed vehicle and less than six hours of field exposure. Compliance with health protocols, including vaccination, had to be ensured upon site visits. After weighing the practical constraints, in-person field visits were ruled out. As an alternative, the evaluators invested substantial time in online community interviews with the technical and logistical support of FAO Philippines, especially the PMCU.

12. Due to the lack of physical presence in the offices and communities, the evaluators were unable to observe, pick up on nuances and sensitivities, and engage with people spontaneously. Poor connectivity sometimes hindered communications.

13. The evaluators depended on the project team to supply electronic documents for review. After having to repeatedly request these documents, many came late or lacked sufficient data. The evaluation used project reports that had been provided until 4 February 2022. Project reports after this period could no longer be verified by the evaluators and therefore were not considered.

14. There were no opportunities to physically validate findings at the project sites nor observe the community seed bank, crops, seeds and farmer interaction. To mitigate this, the evaluators had to rely on the observations of other stakeholders, project reports with photographs, the evaluation team's technical experience and knowledge of the sites, and discussions with Indigenous Peoples.

15. In December 2021, health protocols and lockdown policies resulted in limited farmer participation in the virtual FGD sessions. While clear criteria were set for sampling, due to farmer availability, vaccination status, and personal circumstances related to their own and their family's health, only a few individuals participated. This may have generated a bias towards the better off beneficiaries who had more access to communications or were able to articulate themselves better via virtual means and in Filipino. The combination of the FGD and KII sessions with individual storytelling offset some of these risks.

16. The evaluation was conducted around the Christmas holidays and the upcoming national and local elections. This meant tight scheduling to ensure the availability of all respondents. The support and timely arrangements made by FAO Philippines, particularly the PMCU and government partners, proved crucial.

17. To further mitigate the above limitations, the evaluators repeatedly triangulated the findings from the project documents with the various stakeholders and crossed-referenced them using a number of evaluation tools.

2. Background and context of the project

Box 1. Basic project information

- GEF Project ID Number: 5549
- Recipient country: Philippines
- Implementing agency: FAO
- Executing agency: FAO
- Project start date and expected end: 1 May 2016–31 December 2021
- Mid-term evaluation date: September 2019

Box 2. The project's executive summary

"The project will conserve globally important agrobiodiversity (of rice, mung bean, taro, yam, banana, Manila hemp and others) in traditional agroecosystems. It will have an agroecosystem and landscape perspective, maintaining the provision of ecosystem services on which ABD (agrobiodiversity) conservation depends, and addressing threats originating in the broader landscape. It will help ensure favourable policy conditions; consolidate community-based governance; strengthen technical and organizational capacities at individual and community levels; promote market-based incentives for ABD conservation; and create conditions for further nationwide replication".

Source: GEF. 2015. *Dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in traditional agro-ecosystems of the Philippines.* GCP/PHI/062/GFF. www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/5549

18. Maintaining 5 percent of the world's flora, including more than 9 000 endemic plant species, the Philippines is recognized as one of the world's megadiverse countries and a designated global biodiversity hotspot. The country is home to more than 52 177 described species of plants, animals and microorganisms, of which more than half are found nowhere else in the world. The Philippines forms part of one of the six areas identified worldwide by the GEF as priority genetic reserve locations for wild relatives of agricultural crops (GEF, 2014). Most notably, it is home to more than 5 500 traditional rice varieties and four of their wild relatives. In addition, the country has a broad spectrum of indigenous and endemic species of vegetable and fruit crops, including indigenous varieties of eggplants and cucurbits, mung bean, winged bean, soybeans, taro and yam, and indigenous varieties of banana. The indigenous fibre crop, Manila hemp (abaca), is another prominent example of Philippine agrobiodiversity wealth. The country report, *The state of the plant genetic resources for food and agriculture of the Philippines* (Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry, 2007) provides a detailed breakdown of agricultural species and varieties.

19. This project supports the Government of the Philippines in its effort to conserve the country's globally important agrobiodiversity and traditional agroecosystems. It does so by promoting dynamic conservation practices for upscaling results and approaches on a wider scale. The project's objective is "to enhance, expand and sustain the dynamic conservation practices that sustain globally significant agrobiodiversity in traditional agro-ecosystems of the Philippines" (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a).

20. The project was designed with three interlinked and mutually reinforcing components:

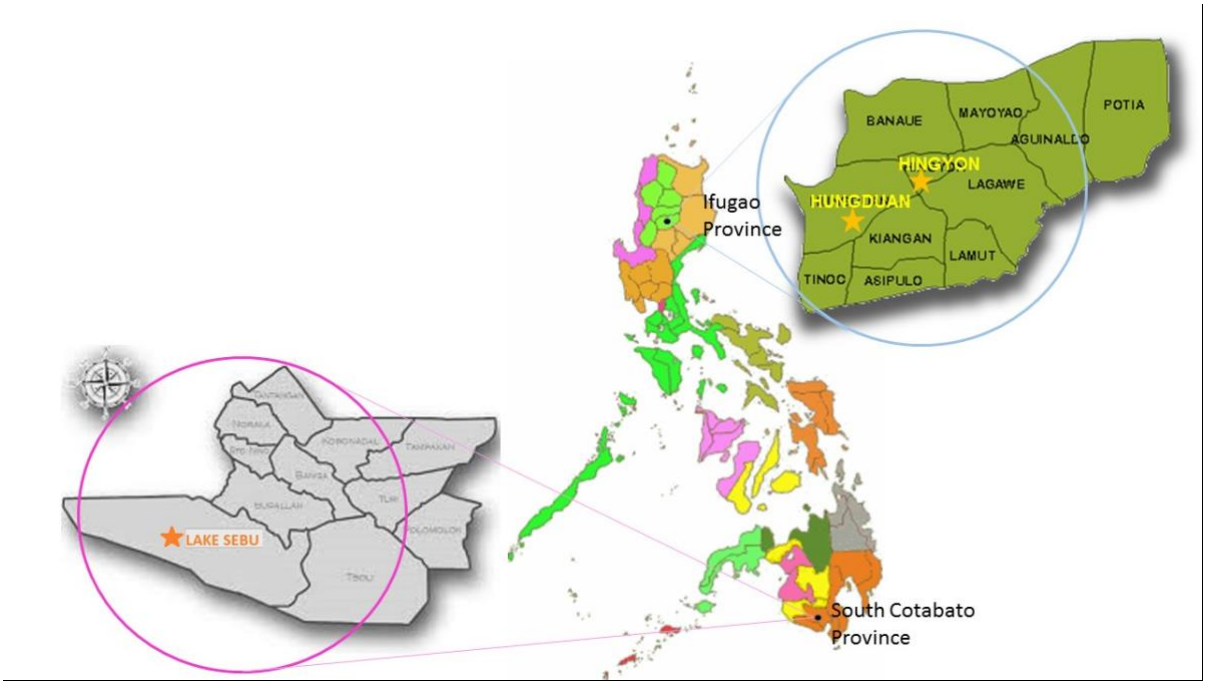
i. Mainstream agrobiodiversity into policy and legal frameworks, development strategies and institutional structures. The intended result is a favourable, enabling environment to implement management and conservation strategies at ground level.
ii. Pilot activities to enhance and expand dynamic conservation practices for agrobiodiversity in three pilot communities. The intended results are direct on-site benefits for agrobiodiversity conservation in the prioritized pilot sites through capacity building among farmers, local authorities and others, as well as generating experiences with the potential for informing policy makers and being scaled up.
iii. Disseminate information, raise awareness and prepare for scaling up with a focus on knowledge management. Knowledge from the pilot sites, past experiences and literature were combined to raise awareness among key actors and to inform the policy work under Component 1 in an iterative manner. This awareness raising is also intended to contribute to the feasibility of the market-based approaches to agrobiodiversity conservation proposed under Component 2.

21. The project ran for 5.5 years (from 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2021), inclusive of a budget neutral extension. The total budget is USD 13 701 955 with USD 2 182 631 financed by the GEF and USD 11 519 324 in pledged co-financing from the Government of the Philippines. The project is managed by FAO Philippines with the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research acting as the lead coordinating agency for the project. It has several collaborating institutions, including LGUs in Ifugao and South Cotabato.

22. The PMCU has 11 consultants for project coordination, training, part-time communications, municipal and provincial coordination, enterprise development, administration and finance, as well as policy and legal expertise. The PMCU is supported by technical staff from the country and regional offices, including support for monitoring and evaluation (M&E), communications, administration and finance at country level. Those involved in the project have agriculture- and project management-related expertise. There is no agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use expertise nor an expert on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

23. The project has 17 pilot sites across three municipalities, namely Hungduan and Hingyon in the province of Ifugao, which is located on the island of Luzon, and Lake Sebu in the province of South Cotabato on the southern part of the island of Mindanao. Hungduan, Hingyon and Lake Sebu are ancestral domains of Indigenous Peoples and cultural heritage sites. In addition, Lake Sebu is part of a protected area. Farmer partners involved in the project are mostly Indigenous Peoples. The project focused on rice, mung bean, taro, Manila hemp (abaca), yam, banana and eggplant.

Figure 1. Project sites in Hingyon and Hungduan, Ifugao, and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato



Source: Project documentation. Map conforms to UN. 2020. *Map of the Philippines*. https://www.un.org/geospatial/content/philippines

24. In terms of change of context, the Philippines elections have often ushered in major changes in politically appointed leaderships. In 2019, the Philippines held mid-term elections for all local government positions at the municipal and provincial levels, congressional representatives and half of the senatorial seats. For example, in the course of project implementation, the Department of Agriculture Secretary changed twice while the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary changed thrice. This change in leadership at the national and local levels may have shifted interests and support for the project, accounting for a number of delays in project implementation. This is beyond the control of the project.

25. The project's MTR was conducted in May 2019, nearly three years into the original 4-year project. Overall, the assessment was Satisfactory. It concluded: "The project suffered significant delays early in implementation and other challenges, although the project has delivered some important results by the MTR point, particularly on Component 2, e.g., construction of all 17 of the Community seed banks, project activities to support adding value to agrobiodiversity crops and their commercialisation, with important capacity building, especially for local communities including Indigenous Peoples' groups. The other components (1 and 3) have delivered some results, e.g., inclusion of indigenous and traditional agrobiodiversity in amendment to the Seed Act, but are likely to deliver much more in [the] coming 12–18 months. Overall, the MTR feels that the project team is doing a good job delivering a complex challenging project with a small GEF budget" (FAO, 2019). A summary of FAO's management response to the MTR recommendations and the corresponding assessment of how the agreed upon actions have been implemented by the project, as assessed by the evaluators, are found in Appendix 6.

2.1 Theory of change

26. While the project design provided a diverse and extensive analysis on the drivers of agrobiodiversity loss, the intervention logic singled out that "the principal underlying barrier to the effective conservation of agrobiodiversity in the Philippines is the inadequate appreciation of the full socio-economic and cultural value of traditional varieties. Benefits derived from agrobiodiversity include superior nutritional value, cultural significance, and higher resilience against shocks like pests, invasive alien species, and extreme weather events" (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a). The project prioritized traditional rice varieties and assumed that the farmers will conserve traditional rice varieties if they value them by deriving (higher) income through marketing. The project further assumed that by increasing the number of traditional rice varieties and the overall production through improved agronomy, the farmers would value and conserve the traditional rice varieties as a source of better income. The project's TOC is centred on these assumptions and the corresponding interventions of removing the barrier of inadequate appreciation of agrobiodiversity. For Component 1, the project assumed that creating awareness among policy makers would lead to favourable policy for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. Hence, the project activities and outputs focused on building an enabling policy environment and legal frameworks to promote traditional varieties. The project also adopted a coordinated approach among key institutions from national to local levels. For Component 2, the project assumed that building capacity for the community-based conservation of agrobiodiversity among farmers and creating market opportunities for traditional varieties could also lead to the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. Hence, the project activities and outputs centred on community genebanks, farmer trainings on conservation, seed management and processing, and packaging of agrobiodiversity for the market. For Component 3, the project assumed that consumer awareness of the superior nutritional value of agrobiodiversity would lead to consumer support, willingness to pay (WTP) and the scaling up of agrobiodiversity conservation and use. Hence, the project activities and outputs focused on dissemination.

27. The project interventions were designed remove barriers to the conservation of agrobiodiversity, and thus, to "the dynamic conservation practices that sustain globally significant agrobiodiversity in traditional agro-ecosystems of the Philippines" (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a).

28. In terms of GEF's institutional and governance additionality, the TOC postulates that a solid basis in terms of knowledge and research, combined with initial momentum at the political level, already exists among the key governmental institutions on environment (Department of Environment and Natural Resources), agriculture (Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research) and cultural heritage (NCIP). GEF's funding will be used to leverage the enhancement of agrobiodiversity conservation. By channelling and adjusting highly fragmented mechanisms that are already in place, the GEF investment in the pilot sites will illustrate approaches to turn the underappreciated value of agrobiodiversity into economic profits for local farmers.

29. In terms of GEF's global environmental additionality, the project postulated that creating awareness, capacity and market incentives for traditional varieties would incrementally contribute to the conservation of agrobiodiversity. This would lead to the benefits derived from agrobiodiversity, including superior nutritional value, cultural significance and higher resilience against shocks like pests, invasive alien species and extreme weather events. In

addition, GEF's support is aligned with two legally binding international agreements to which the Philippines is a signatory country: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the ITPGRFA.

2.1.1 The evaluation team's initial observations on the theory of change

30. From the evaluator's analysis, the project's TOC has a few technical blind spots regarding its agrobiodiversity approach. First, while the conservation of traditional varieties is very important, the farmers need to adapt their (traditional and modern) plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) to rapidly changing environmental and market conditions. These changes cannot be ignored. For instance, it is increasingly documented that around the world, farmers and Indigenous Peoples – including those from the Philippines – are combining early maturing cultivars to manage climate variability such as erratic rainfall and insect population dynamics. In this regard, the project's conservation approach, without adaptation and improvements through crop breeding, for example, may be rather limited. Hence, the project's central hypothesis that agrobiodiversity conservation is primarily affected by a lack of recognition needs to be balanced with a scientific perspective. Second, the project assumes, without varietal testing, that traditional varieties and landraces remain resilient to increasingly virulent pests and diseases, and extreme climate shocks such as droughts. Third, the project does not sufficiently factor in land use and simply assumes that the limitations of the traditional varieties and landraces are on the demand side. It does not address the supply side. For example, the temporal increase in the production of traditional rice varieties is highly limited given the photoperiod sensitivity[3] of traditional rice varieties. This means that planting can only be for one annual cropping season, unlike modern varieties that can have two to three growing seasons. Although the production of traditional rice varieties can be improved, a significant increase in production would require the spatial expansion of land use. This may not be feasible, nor desirable.

31. Lastly, the TOC lacks perspective on addressing peoples' vulnerabilities to shocks such as climate change (to which the Philippines is one of the most exposed countries), trends such as market supply and demand, and seasonality such as an agricultural calendar, lean and season of plenty, and labour demand. The evaluation will further consider how a more comprehensive approach to agrobiodiversity management would include: (i) not only agrobiodiversity conservation through storage and continued planting but also varietal improvement in the context of dynamic food systems and the needs of Indigenous Peoples; (ii) more holistic support for farmers' and Indigenous Peoples' agrobiodiversity management that looks at the use and management of both traditional and modern crops and varieties for food security and livelihood; and (iii) integrated agrobiodiversity management to include community-based disaster risk reduction and a climate change response.

[3] Photoperiod sensitivity is defined as the developmental responses of plants to the relative duration of light and dark. It provides many plant species with the ability to adapt to a range of growing seasons by means of adjusting flowering time. Traditional rice varieties follow the natural duration of light and dark. Therefore, their ripening process takes longer compared to modern varieties.

3. Key findings by evaluation questions

3.1 Relevance

Evaluation question 1. Relevance – To what extent have the project's objectives and design been consistent with the Government of the Philippines' and local priorities and policies; to the GEF's strategic priorities and objectives, FAO's strategic programmes, and adds value to the dynamic conservation and use of critical agrobiodiversity, including global environmental benefits?

Overall rating: Satisfactory

Finding 1. The project's objective regarding the dynamic conservation and use of critical agrobiodiversity is highly relevant and aligned with global, national and local level policies and priorities. Specifically, (i) the project is consistent with two complementary and legally binding international obligations to which the Philippines is a contracting party, and correspondingly aligns with GEF's biodiversity strategy (GEF, 2018e); (ii) at the national level, the project's objective supports the *Philippine biodiversity strategy and action plan 2015–2028* (Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, 2016a); (iii) for local implementation of this action plan, the project is supportive of the LGUs, local communities and Indigenous Peoples; and (iv) the project is aligned with FAO Philippines' country strategy in its support for the Philippine development plan. Further, the project supports and complements a number of FAO global programmes and initiatives that are relevant to the project.

32. At the global level, the project is aligned with the CBD's *Strategic plan for biodiversity for the period 2011–2020*, particularly Target 13 of the Aichi biodiversity targets: "By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity" (CBD, 2010).

33. The project aligns with FAO's ITPGRFA, specifically: Article 5.1, "…Contracting Parties where appropriate, promote an integrated approach to the exploration, conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture"; Article 6.1, "the Contracting Parties shall develop and maintain appropriate policy and legal measures that promote the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture"; Article 6.2.f, "supporting, as appropriate, the wider use of diversity of varieties and species in on-farm management, conservation and sustainable use of crops and creating strong links to … agricultural development in order to reduce crop vulnerability and genetic erosion … and promote increased world food production compatible with sustainable development"; Article 9 on Farmers' Rights, specifically Article 9.1, "the Contracting Parties recognize the enormous contribution that the local and Indigenous communities and farmers of all regions of the world, particularly those in the centres of origin and crop diversity, have made and will continue to make for the conservation and development of plant genetic resources which constitute the basis of food and agriculture production throughout the world"; and Article 9.2, "…each Contracting Party should, as appropriate, and subject to its national legislation, take measures to protect and promote Farmers' Rights, including: a) protection of traditional knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture" (FAO, 2009).

34. In compliance with Article 6 of the CBD, the Government of the Philippines has formulated the *National biodiversity strategic action plan 2015–2028* (Department of Environment and

Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, 2016a) as the principal instrument for implementing CBD in the country. Anchored on the Philippine development plan, the vision for the national biodiversity strategic action plan is that "by 2028, biodiversity is restored and rehabilitated, valued, effectively managed and secured, maintaining ecosystem services to sustain healthy, resilient Filipino communities and delivering benefits to all" (ibidem). The plan emphasizes the importance of agrobiodiversity in protecting and promoting the use of traditional crop varieties, as well as enhancing people's livelihoods. Within this strategic action plan, the Government of the Philippines has committed to the establishment of at least ten nationally recognized agricultural heritage systems. The corresponding policies and programmes to support and acknowledge communities practicing heritage agriculture are to be formulated and mainstreamed into the LGU plans.

35. The project's objective is aligned with GEF's 2018–2022 biodiversity strategy (GEF, 2018e), as agreed upon in the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP 13). This relates to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources that meet the needs of rural communities. This practice is done through farmer management and adaptation and involves Indigenous Peoples and local communities – especially women – who often depend on agrobiodiversity for their livelihoods through its contribution to food security and nutrition. The GEF supports the mainstreaming of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use in production landscapes. In addition, GEF's strategy supports capacity development as well as policy and institutional framework development for the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, which also aligns with the ITPGRFA. In this regard, the objectives of the project respond to GEF's institutional and governance additionality, including global environmental benefits.

36. The project's objective is aligned with the FAO Philippines country strategy (CBD, 2010). This relates to improved agricultural productivity within ecological limits and increased agricultural-based enterprises that focus on the intensification of value chains and equitable use of natural resources, that is, agrobiodiversity. Globally, the project supports and complements a number of existing FAO programmes and initiatives that are relevant to the project. These include: (i) the implementation of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) initiative; (ii) the implementation of the *Second global plan of action for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture*, also known as Second GPA (CGRFA, 2012); (iii) contribution to *The state of the world's biodiversity for food and agriculture* (FAO CGRFAA, 2019); (iv) climate smart agriculture; (v) the FAO policy on Indigenous and tribal peoples; (vi) the Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC); and (vii) the Regional Rice Initiative.

Finding 2. Conceptually, project design is highly innovative and relevant. It has the potential to add value to the dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity. Anchoring on GIAHS, the project pushed for the creation of Locally and Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (LIAHS and NIAHS), therefore interlinking agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use from plant genetics to farm and landscape levels. LIAHS and NIAHS are remarkable land use systems and landscapes that are rich in nationally and locally significant biological diversity, traditional knowledge and "invaluable cultures sustainably managed by farmers, herders, fisherfolk, and forest people in ways that contribute to their livelihoods, food security and sustainable development" (FAO, n.d.b). The Ifugao rice terraces are GIAHS recognized.

37. The project's proposed interventions were designed to "critically complement, adjust and improve ongoing government programmes and consolidate fragmented efforts related to

agrobiodiversity into a coherent and strategic approach to agrobiodiversity conservation" (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a). The project aims to provide a proof of concept (POC) on how to dynamically conserve and use agrobiodiversity within the perimeters of protected and biodiversity-rich agroecosystems. Lake Sebu and Ifugao are major biodiversity hotspots, and Ifugao is a GIAHS site. They are outstanding examples as to why the Philippines is recognized as one of the world's megadiverse countries. It features a range of globally recognized agricultural species and varieties that are relevant to food and agriculture. The project aimed to conserve and use critically important agrobiodiversity such as rice, mung bean, taro, yam, banana, and Manila hemp (abaca) through an agroecosystem and landscape perspective. It intended to maintain the provision of ecosystem services on which agrobiodiversity conservation depends and address threats originating in the broader landscape. The project also aimed to integrate favourable policy conditions, consolidate community-based governance, strengthen technical and organizational capacities at the individual and community levels, promote market-based incentives for agrobiodiversity conservation, and create conditions for further nationwide replication. Such a unique model is highly relevant for not only the Philippines but also the world, particularly for the CBD's contracting parties and the ITPGRFA.

38. The project's policy component is well designed with a systematic analysis of relevant Philippine policies and laws on agriculture, the environment, education, culture and Indigenous Peoples. This provides different pathways for possible mainstreaming and uptake for policy support in agrobiodiversity conservation. During implementation, multistakeholder consultations at the national and local levels were conducted to identify policy gaps. Policy options and tools were then formulated for discussion on behalf of stakeholders and government departments.

39. The project was designed to generate awareness, develop capacities and improve market incentives for traditional varieties. Outreach or targeted knowledge products and knowledge sharing schemes for other ICC/IP were not included in the design, except via existing knowledge sharing initiatives of government agencies. For example, the inclusion of agrobiodiversity and indigenous farming knowledge adds to an already existing indigenous curriculum.

40. The project design directly targeted only 1 000 smallholders and Indigenous Peoples. Indirectly, there were 4 000 beneficiaries of knowledge sharing programmes from partners that implement complementary projects in the areas. For a project with a budget of over USD 13.7 million, the target beneficiary numbers are disproportionately small.

41. Although not factored into the design, the project identified climate change and variability as barriers to agrobiodiversity conservation. Instead, focus was placed on maintaining diverse traditional varieties based on a limited range of high yielding varieties. The project did not scope for improving traditional crops as part of traditional varieties conservation and as a climate resilience strategy. The project also missed the opportunity to leverage agrobiodiversity for community-based disaster risk reduction and management.

Finding 3. Project design changes over the course of implementation were based on untested assumptions and weak diagnosis. Some project interventions did not address the drivers of biodiversity loss. As such, the technical design and expected results may not be fully relevant nor appropriate in meeting the agrobiodiversity needs of men and women farmers and Indigenous communities.

42. A major change in the project design was the omission of the landscape approach in the conservation and sustainable use of the project's crop focus. Originally, the project meant to have a "landscape perspective, maintaining the provision of ecosystem services on which agrobiodiversity conservation depends, and addressing threats originating in the broader landscape" (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a). As a POC on the dynamic conservation and use of agrobiodiversity within the NIAHS, for example, the project did not include a process to systematically analyse results for developing, improving, sustaining and scaling up models of dynamic conservation and use of agrobiodiversity at landscape levels. The MTR concluded that the landscape approach had been dropped and should be addressed in the remainder of the project. However, the project did not respond to this. As indicated by the GEF FLO, the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit did not receive a written request from the project and the GEF did not provide written approval for the project to omit the landscape approach.

43. Since the project did not include the landscape approach, as it had originally planned, some critical drivers of biodiversity loss such as habitat loss and climate change were not addressed and/or incorporated. This included those related to the integrated forest and water basin community management with farmlands, and with indigenous natural resource management and Indigenous Peoples' agrifood systems. The conservation and sustainable use approach of the project was not fully informed by the complex agrobiodiversity management of the diversity of smallholder farmers and Indigenous Peoples.

44. Community-based systems for the production and management of planting materials, that is, a community genebank (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a) for 17 community seed banks provided another major design change. In the design phase, the nature of the community genebank was meant to depend on farmer and community decisions in each location. The original project idea was to complement the Department of Agriculture community seed banks, which were linked to local seed systems and the national genebank. The project's community genebank was originally planned to include seed maintenance, such as planting small quantities of seeds to ensure sample quality and availability for exchange. There were options for Hingyon to build on a network of farmers by mapping out the varieties planted within their communities. The design shifted from a user-demand genebank to 17 project-prescribed seed banks. This shift was not guided by a systematic baseline to diagnose the state of crop genetic erosion and the associated loss of indigenous knowledge systems. Nor was it guided by an analysis of the local and indigenous seed systems or any indication of seed shortage among the selected crops in the project areas. In addition, the community seed banks were not driven by evidence based on priority needs, crop and varietal trait preferences, as well as indigenous knowledge on seed selection and storage. The 17 community seed banks were a major component of the project design but lacked clear and measurable agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use objectives.

45. The project's marketing design was informed only by a broad study. Specific business feasibility studies to assess the supply, demand and return on investment (ROI) were not conducted. This deviates from the initial project design that proposed detailed market valuation analyses for specific traditional varieties, product types and labels, and certification schemes aimed at a high return on investment (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a).

46. In an effort to be relevant locally, the project supported practices and policies that did not align with the project's agrobiodiversity conservation. For example, the project supported

synchronous farming for efficient water use and pest population management. Synchronous farming, however, does not fully consider the risks associated with increasingly erratic weather patterns and severe natural disasters. Under increasingly erratic weather patterns, crop diversity involving different stages of maturity may offer better climate adaptation and resilience strategies for the communities.

3.2 Effectiveness

Evaluation question 2. Effectiveness – To what extent have the project's objectives been achieved and were there any unintended results? How have the results demonstrated the project's contribution to the dynamic conservation and use of critical agrobiodiversity?

Overall rating: Moderately Satisfactory

Finding 4. Component 1: the project has made impressive headway towards achieving its policy objectives. The project has significantly contributed to addressing the fragmentation of institutional structures that are crucial to the formulation and implementation of agrobiodiversity policies and laws in the Philippines. The project was able to bring the various key institutional actors at national and local levels through an experiential and awareness raising process of working towards agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. The process motivated the key institutional actors to support enabling policies.

The overall rating for Component 1 is Satisfactory.

Outcome 1.1. Strengthened policy and legal framework defining a national approach to agrobiodiversity and guiding the design and implementation of corresponding activities at the national and local levels

47. The project developed and steered processes for cross-cutting and intersectional policies (see Appendix 9). This is a considerable achievement, given that there is no overarching policy framework to align the project at national level. Agrobiodiversity relates to the mandates of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Even within the Department of Agriculture, no focal agency provides oversight and direction for national agrobiodiversity work. The project strategically identified and anchored its approach on key policy frameworks, then explored potential headways within existing plans and policies. For example, under the national Biodiversity strategic action plan 2015–2028 (Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, 2016a), the Government of the Philippines' commitment to the CBD (result number 15) indicates at least ten nationally recognized NIAHS. The project pushed for a Joint Memorandum Circular of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the NCIP on the rules and regulations for joint confirmation, declaration and recognition of the NIAHS. This is an important policy instrument that can be used by LGUs, local communities, Indigenous Peoples and other relevant actors. It can leverage support from government agencies for community initiatives on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use by declaring a landscape or ecosystem an NIAHS. The project further worked to operationalize this commitment by setting up the three pilot municipalities as NIAHS. In particular, this included support for drafting ordinances and the necessary documentation for submission and deliberation in the local councils for LIAHS recognition.

48. Aside from the NIAHS, the project led and supported the development of progressive policies that highlighted the importance of farmers' and Indigenous Peoples' agrobiodiversity and associated knowledge systems. Over a 2-year period, the project convened different stakeholders to agree upon proposed amendments to the country's Seed Industry Development Act (The Republic of the Philippines, 1992). This has created the inclusion and equal recognition of informal and farmer seed systems in seed industry development.

49. The project made progress towards mainstreaming agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use by exploring intersectional policies covering agriculture, the environment and ICC/IP. This is exemplified by the Joint Memorandum Order, *National convergence initiative for sustainable rural development* (NCI-SRD) (The Republic of the Philippines, 2020). This mainstreamed agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use within the National Convergence Initiative's (NCI) existing policy framework, which is the government's response to the fragmented delivery of rural development services. Specifically, the project proposed that traditional agroecosystems be equally prioritized as convergence areas,[4] and that the components of the NCI address the concerns and challenges of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

50. Aside from local resolutions directly supporting the project and its implementation in the different barangays and municipalities of Hungduan and Hingyon in Ifugao and Lake Sebu in South Cotabato, the project was able to mainstream agrobiodiversity in the 2020–2022 executive and legislative agenda of South Cotabato. This has provided the local government with a pathway to focus and undertake agricultural development in the uplands by working with farmers and Indigenous communities, and their agrobiodiversity.

51. Without diminishing the project's policy accomplishments, the outcome harvesting, FGD sessions and semi-structured interviews highlight a disconnect between policy work (Component 1) and the community-based activity on agrobiodiversity (Component 2), especially in synthesizing and harnessing community experiences to inform policy. This has created some gaps and areas of concern, especially as some of the policies are still pending approval. One of the most significant changes brought by the project, as articulated by the communities, is their sense of identity and recognition, which has been accorded to them by government agencies. However, the amendment of the Seed Industry Development Act (The Republic of the Philippines, 1992) did not specifically mention the Indigenous Peoples' contribution, and the need for their representation and participation in policy and programme co-creation.

52. The project's support for the Department of Agriculture circular on registering traditional varieties has yet to ensure that Indigenous Peoples and their agrobiodiversity are protected against potential misappropriation. There is no provision for clear Material Transfer

[4] The convergence areas are identified by the different departments using the ridge to reef approach. The four departments undertake the planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a jointly drafted convergence area development plan.

Agreement (MTA)[5] and Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)[6] mechanisms for farmers and Indigenous Peoples. The project's support for the Department of Agriculture registration is without provisions for the Indigenous Peoples to develop their own form of varietal registry[7] aligned with their customary laws and practices. This could be a bias against the Indigenous Peoples and may violate the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (The Republic of the Philippines, 1997).

Outcome 1.2. Enhanced institutional coordination and capacity to effectively address cross-sectoral issues of agrobiodiversity

53. The project's institutional formation – the national, provincial and local project coordinating committees – were catalytic in the successful achievement of the policy objectives. While the project coordinating committees were designed to guide the project and address concerns, they also created a policy space where different institutions can discuss a common agenda. This included enabling policies and mainstreaming agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use within existing organizational policies, plans and programmes. This way, the project was able to convene the various institutional actors to cooperate on agrobiodiversity conservation. They answered semi-structured interviews, and highlighted the project's contribution in strengthening institutional relationships between and among agencies. Some acknowledged that agrobiodiversity was not on their radar prior to the project but started to be incorporated into their local plans and programmes in agriculture and even in tourism after it. The various institutional actors in the coordinating committees were able to identify the policy spaces where agrobiodiversity could be included in their respective institutional agendas.

54. The project also stirred interest and conversations among the coordinating committee members in parallel initiatives such as the Department of Agriculture-Department of Environment and National Resources Joint Administrative Order 2021-01 (Department of Agriculture-Department of Environment and National Resources, 2021). While this is not an output with direct influence on its formulation, the project monitored its development because some sites are located within protected areas and the involved institutions also had exposure to it.

Finding 5. Component 2: the project made progress in contributing towards planning and governance mechanisms. The most tangible results are local resolutions in support of the project

[5] MTAs are legal instruments that define terms for the transfer of tangible biological materials between or among two or more parties. They are bailments that transfer possession but not title: the party who transfers the material retains full ownership; the party who receives the materials holds them in trust. Transfer is governed by contract, ideally specifying the term of the transfer, how the materials may and may not be used, and other related issues such as confidentiality. In addition, an MTA may contain licensing provisions for the transfer of embedded intellectual property rights (patent rights).

[6] ABS refers to the way in which genetic resources (in this case, seeds) may be accessed, and how the benefits that result from their use are shared between the people or countries using the resources (users) and the people or countries that provide them (providers) (CBD, 2011).

[7] A community registry of locally bred varieties is an option for farmers and Indigenous Peoples under the Philippine Plant Variety Protection Act of 2002 (The Republic of the Philippines, 2002, Sec. 72). Likewise, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act provides for special measures to control, develop and protect indigenous sciences, technologies and cultural manifestations, including human and other genetic resources, seeds, traditional medicines and health practices, vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals, knowledge systems and practices, oral traditions, literature, designs, and visual and performing arts (The Republic of the Philippines, 1997, Sec. 34).

and a sense of ownership and commitment among stakeholders. The project made limited contributions to enhance and expand dynamic conservation practices for agrobiodiversity in three pilot communities. As discussed in the Findings section, the community seed banks, demonstration farms and farm machinery have shown limited functionality and uptake from the farmers. Likewise, the volume and sales of agrobiodiversity products have been very low and do not indicate financial viability, while marketing links to agrobiodiversity awareness have been minimal.

The overall rating for Component 2 is Moderately Unsatisfactory.

Outcome 2.1. Conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity is supported by planning and governance mechanisms

Finding 6. With regard to the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity being supported by planning and governance mechanisms, the municipalities issued resolutions to support the project. These were followed by the executive orders, which created the municipal coordinating councils and technical working groups for the eventual establishment of the LIAHS. The project organized and revived more than ten organizations, farmers associations and women's groups within and across communities.

55. The FGD sessions with farmer leaders and about 10 percent of the 21 farmers of the Most Significant Change exercise identified the change in the organizations' management and leadership as one of the most significant contributions brought by the project. At the local level, all 17 pilot barangays issued resolutions to support the project activities. In addition, the LGUs allocated in-kind co-financing from other potentially complementary programmes, such as the distribution of farm tools, vegetable seeds and organic farming support. The LGUs cautioned that the formalities were important prerequisites, but these did not guarantee a sustained implementation because the May 2022 election could lead to local leadership substitution.

56. The formal resolutions are important milestones, which also demonstrate the ownership and commitments of the LGUs. Ownership and commitment were also expressed in the FGD and KII sessions of the evaluation. Moreover, the project contributed to the establishment of leadership skills and confidence among Indigenous men and women.

57. In addition, the project's immediate compliance with free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) was good practice. This helped facilitate ownership and commitment among the Indigenous communities. Although the NCIP monitored the FPIC implementation, the evaluation noted significant gaps as discussed in the ESS section on risk. Aside from the formal certificate and administrative report, the project did not document the process and thematic content of FPIC proceedings and subsequent monitoring. Hence, valuable lessons that could have been part of the global environmental additionality were not captured.

Outcome 2.2. Traditional varieties are maintained in community gene banks

Finding 7. While the MTR assessed the establishment of 17 community seed banks in 2018 as a major achievement of the project, the evaluation found that for the actual implementation, the community seed banks were neither fully functional nor fully utilized. The rationale for recommending, designing, and using conserved traditional varieties in communitarian seed banks and genebanks shows limited results.

58. The evaluation questions the project's assessment that "the threat of losing the traditional rice varieties has been addressed through the completion, turn-over and utilization of 17 Community seed banks for the storage of seeds and availability during planting, seed

exchanges among farmers, and as genetic materials stored in small quantities both through *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation" (FAO-GEF Project Implementation Report, in: GEF, 2015a). There is no evidence to support this claim, which seems technically flawed in addressing the drivers of agrobiodiversity loss and the corresponding needs of the Indigenous Peoples. Further, the community seed banks have not leveraged the available indigenous knowledge for the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA). The following paragraphs outline the problems associated with the community seed banks.

Finding 8. Key diagnostic activities, which should inform the rationale and design of the community seed banks, were not prioritized. They were conducted only towards the end of project implementation. Without a proper diagnosis, it is impossible to define the solid rationale, objectives and operations of the seedbank. The project document originally planned for three community seed banks and three seed stores (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a). By the second year, however, this was quickly expanded to one community seed bank for each of the 17 barangays of the project.

59. First, the project did not conduct a participatory baseline study on the farmers' PGRFA management, particularly for rice-based farming systems in Ifugao and Lake Sebu. A baseline study could have enabled more farmers to provide inputs beyond the project's narrow range of 1 000 direct beneficiaries. Greater rigour and inclusivity would have been beneficial. Second, farmer profiles have yet to be completed. Indigenous Peoples' vulnerability assessments and a gender analysis have not been conducted. Establishing women's PGRFA knowledge and trait preferences has not been done. Third, there was neither a systematic diagnosis nor consultation on the needs and priorities of the Indigenous communities for the conservation and sustainable use of traditional rice varieties and broader agrobiodiversity. Also, the mutual complementarities between the community seed banks and the vital Indigenous Peoples' practice of household seed storage were not explored. There have been no assessments of their seed systems and seed security, nor has there been an indication of rice seed shortages. Community seed banks cannot exist in a vacuum and need to be linked with seed systems.

60. The project conducted a four cell analysis. The four cell analysis is a participatory tool that facilitates a systematic review of farmers' logic on the extent and distribution of local crop diversity, and identifies common, unique and rare plant genetic resources. It aims at allowing the community and professionals to develop diversified livelihood options and conservation plans (Sthapit, Shrestha and Upadhyay, 2006). However, the results of the four cell analysis were not used to understand the underlying criteria and rationale of the farmers' trait preferences and decision-making in their PGRFA management. Therefore, the project failed to concretize the farmers' objectives for agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

Finding 9. The project's rationale in relation to the purpose[8] of conservation and use of traditional varieties remains unclear. This is being manifested in the unfocused operations of the community

[8] According to the "CSB Management Training" PowerPoint presentation, the community seed banks have the following purposes: storage of good planting materials/seeds for the next cropping season; easy access to seeds/planting material for farmers; facility for conservation and sustainable use of traditional agricultural biodiversity crops; buffer stock in case of calamity; starter seeds for recovering traditional rice varieties and for those farmers who cannot access or afford quality seeds.

seed banks, which are a key component of the project's on-farm agrobiodiversity conservation strategy.

61. The evaluation of the FGD sessions confirmed that all the Indigenous communities preferred traditional rice varieties. These remain highly valued for consumption and are widely planted in the fields. In the case of Manila hemp (abaca), banana, yam and tubers, these are still widely available in farmers' fields or in the wild. So far, traditional varieties, which farmers may still prefer but no longer plant, were sourced from other villages. The reason for conserving such varieties in the community seed banks is therefore unclear. The FGD sessions also confirmed that there were no pronounced seed shortages nor major constraints in the farmers' traditional practice of seed exchange. Hence the need for a seed bank, including a nursery for roots crops and Manila hemp (abaca), is questionable. The project has not established why a number of traditional varieties have been disused to the point of disappearing.[9] This information, based on the farmers' statements, could be relevant in defining the objectives and intervention for conservation and use.

62. The MTR recommended separating the genebank and seed bank functions but did not review the rationale, objectives, design and alternatives to community seed banks. Further, the MTR did not assess if the community seed banks were the best pathway to improve and strengthen the existing agrobiodiversity that is specific to the project area. The MTR stated that establishing the 17 community seed banks was a considerable achievement, but also noted the low amount of stocked seeds.

63. The project referred to the FPIC Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the three provinces as a foundation of the 17 community seed banks. There was no technical basis for establishing all 17 community seed banks. First, each of the three FPIC MOAs stated the establishment and/or repair of "one community seed bank, if deemed necessary." The project's interpretation – one community seed bank for each of the 17 villages, rather than one for each of the three municipalities – is technically unfounded. No technical study informed such a stance. Second, it is unclear how the project established the "if deemed necessary" clause considering the lack of technical assessment and diagnosis. Third, considering the highly demanding operations and maintenance of the community seed bank, it would have been more prudent to pilot a few repositories rather than scale out to 17 all at once. Fourth, during the KII sessions, the project team and partners rationalized the difficult terrain and travel distances between the villages as a basis for establishing all 17 seed banks. This is technically unsound as traditional rice is only grown once a year, especially considering that only a small quantity of seeds is needed per hectare. Fifth, in the absence of a baseline study, farmer profiles, vulnerability assessments, a gender analysis and systematic consultations with the wider communities, the corresponding project response should still be based on technical merits – even if the beneficiaries requested their own seed bank.

64. The projects stated that the community seed banks serve as a buffer during calamities. The evaluation found that the volume of the seed stocks was low while no activities were

[9] For example, the four cell analysis of traditional rice varieties in Lake Sebu showed that the varieties with specific or limited use value were under threat. However, no identification and analysis of those specific uses and limited use value were performed.

ensuring seed quality and multiplication. The PMCU replied[10] that all of the seed banks were fully functional, despite the lack of consistent data on which varieties were kept in which seed bank. There was no information on basic activities relating to the characterization of the collection, quality control such as seed moisture content, rate of germination, and who borrowed which varieties and why. Since seeds are experience goods[11] that are vital to farmers' livelihoods, it is key to apply basic standards to the activities and track quality control. In fact, farmers can only ascertain the quality of the seeds after they have been planted and grown. By that time, if the seeds are of bad quality, the livelihoods of the farmers are ruined.

65. A fundamental concern of the evaluation, which was also raised by the MTR, was the lack of both clarity in the project's target and well-defined outcomes on conservation and sustainable use for the community seed banks. The 2019 and 2020 technical working group meetings[12] deliberated on the ownership of the community seed bank, its added value for the communities and whether a genebank (storage for safeguarding crop and varietal diversity) or a seed bank (storage and multiplication of diversity of the seed supply) is needed. The technical working group also noted the absence of community seed bank reporting.

66. The project did not consider alternative interventions. These include low maintenance yet potentially effective operations such as community bio-registers[13] and improved technical support for households and community seed networks and exchanges. This finding is in light of the previously noted factors: traditional rice varieties remain widely grown, while Manila hemp (abaca), banana and root crops proliferate on farms and in the wild. In fact, there are no reports of seed shortages. Further, the community seed bank should have been designed to complement – not replace – the existing indigenous knowledge and practices of household seed selection and storage, and farmer-to-farmer seed exchange.

67. In terms of community participation, contrary to global good practices of intensive community participation in the establishment of community seed banks, all of the evaluation's FGD and KII sessions confirmed that the various Indigenous Peoples in the pilot areas felt inadequately consulted on the design. A few of them made minimal labour contributions to the construction of the community seed banks. LGUs or private individuals contributed with land allocation. In compliance with FAO's procurement, the project provided uniform specifications for all 17 community seed banks. FAO awarded the design and construction of all 17 community seed banks to one consulting organization: The Jaime

[10] Evaluation comments matrix: 24 January 2022. Feedback from the FAO Philippines team on the presentation: *Dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in traditional agro-ecosystems of the Philippines* (GCP/PHI/062/GFF - GEF ID 5549).

[11] This refers to goods and services that are difficult to assess in advance.

[12] 2nd Technical Working Group Meeting Minutes. 29 July 2019. Sulu Hotel, Quezon City, and 3rd Technical Working Group Meeting Minutes. 29 January 2020. Verjandel Hotel, Quezon City.

[13] In general, the community seed registry, also known as a bio-registry, is a community-curated listing, map and recording of local crops and varieties. It can contain characteristics of the varieties, their availability and which household keeps them on a seasonal basis. The registry facilitates seed exchanges and allows for gauging what seeds are no longer planted, so that the community can decide to source and plant them again. The community seed registry is also a tool to protect farmers' seeds from misappropriation by making them publicly known and acknowledging their developers, thus upholding the principle that seeds should be freely and widely accessed and exchanged. For an example, see (FAO, n.d.a).

V. Ongpin Foundation, Inc., which is highly experienced in environmental work and social enterprises, especially with Indigenous Peoples. However, the foundation lacks know-how in agrobiodiversity conservation and community seed banks. As widely expressed in the evaluation's FGDs, the uniform specification of all 17 community seed banks did not leave adequate space for the diverse Indigenous Peoples to adapt the design according to their needs. For instance, the FGD participants pointed out the lack of a smoking facility to prevent insect infestation.

68. The evaluation of FGD sessions showed that the perceived lack of participation in community seed bank construction resulted in a mixed sense of ownership among its members, the officers and local leaders. They all found the construction cost to be expensive. Despite local consultations on the community seed banks, many felt that their local knowledge on preventing rat and insect infestations were not fully considered in the design. In both Ifugao and Lake Sebu, at least two community seed banks were non-functional and empty due to a severe rat infestation at the time of the evaluation. The project stated that the problems had been addressed and that the community seed banks were functional based on a December 2019 back-to-office report. This contradicts the evaluation's more recent FGD and KII sessions from December 2021.

Finding 10. In terms of implementation, the low levels of membership, seed stock and use, and number of rice varieties, plus the farmers' concern about the reliability and quality of seeds put the viability of the 17 community seed banks into question.

69. Combined, the evaluation of the FGD and KII sessions and project reports indicated that seed deposit and borrowing have been low since the establishment of the community seed banks in 2018. Even though all 17 community seed banks were open to non-members, they totalled just 521 affiliates. Traditional rice varieties spanned from five to ten in each community seed bank. For instance, in 2021, only 138 farmers borrowed from the community seed banks in Lake Sebu. In Ifugao, the utilization was negligible with just seven farmers borrowing. During the FGD sessions, the farmers stated that in order to ensure the quality of this vital resource, they and Indigenous Peoples prefer to secure their own seeds in their own households and exchange them with other trusted growers. As seeds are experience goods (see Paragraph 85), farmers' trust in the quality and reliability of seeds is key in the proper functioning of community seed banks.

70. As noted, key information and basic data management for the proper functioning of the community seed banks were missing. Moreover, researchers at PhilRice, with the assistance of local technicians, characterized the traditional rice varieties in the community seed banks. This made it hard for the farmers to understand their conservation and use management agenda, despite the well-established and recognized indigenous knowledge on plant folk taxonomy and ethnobotany. Although the project is ending, the farmers have yet to be involved in the characterization and apply their traditional knowledge. So far, the research partners have been characterizing the traditional rice varieties via Bioversity International's descriptor lists (Bioversity International, n.d.), which facilitate international data management, exchange and use of plant resources. The use of conventional scientific knowledge should be highly useful for the project, but this should complement and not replace traditional and indigenous knowledge.

71. Positively, in September 2021 the NCIP stated that high numbers of traditional rice varieties were restored in the pilot areas of Lake Sebu, South Cotabato. For example, in one pilot area, as many as 100 traditional varieties have reportedly been restored. The evaluation can

neither confirm nor assess the significance of this achievement given the lack of baseline data and technical reporting on identifying these traditional rice varieties, their traits and range, and what varieties they replaced, if any.

72. In terms of the link between *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation, the project preserved small quantities of 165 traditional rice varieties in the national genebank. Beyond this, the project reported that the characterization of these traditional rice varieties was nearly 70 percent complete by PhilRice (Project report, October 2021). The characterization included nutritional analysis. Further, the project endorsed submissions for the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry registration of the characterized cultivars (13 rice, 1 Manila hemp [abaca], 1 maize and 2 banana). However, the collection, storage, characterization and registration of indigenous and endemic varieties of crops grown by Indigenous Peoples and their traditional knowledge needed to follow technical and legal protocols, be subject to ABS mechanisms, and comply with FPIC provisions (see Finding 32).

73. The community seed banks are used for multiple secondary purposes such as serving as meeting places for the local communities, storage for various farm tools distributed by the project, and a product display for sales or ecotourism. While it is good for the community seed banks to be multifunctional, their primary purpose as a key agrobiodiversity strategy should take precedence.

74. The project also collaborated with the Department of Agriculture's Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority for technical support on three micropropagation chambers in Lake Sebu, including the establishment of a 0.5 ha nursery of Manila hemp (abaca) and two of its traditional varieties. The evaluation was unable to find data and reporting on the rationale for the micropropagation of the Manila hemp (abaca) varieties. This included the capacities to operate and maintain the micropropagation chambers, and actual outputs and uptake of the abaca seedlings. The project briefly noted that certain species of abaca risk extinction. If the project intended to address extinction, then this would require a vastly different technical approach and expertise that goes beyond its scope.

75. While the project had a clear rationale for crop selection, it did not report activities and results on the conservation and use of taro, yams, banana, eggplant and mung beans during implementation.

Finding 11. The project established 15 demonstration farms with 86 farmer cooperators. In most cases, the demonstration farms also host the community seed banks. The rationale for and results of the demonstration farms are unclear, and the investment and maintenance costs need to be considered in this. The low harvest, missing data on varietal performance and the absence of learning objectives for the farmers also indicate the lack of clarity and quality in what is actually being demonstrated by the project.

76. The harvest from the demonstration farms was meant to supply seeds for the community seed banks. However, as stated by Assistant FAOR for Programme in an email dated 2 December 2021: "their main functionality remains low. During the field visits in South Cotabato, few rice seeds were seen to be stocked in the CSBs [Community Seed Banks] due to the very low harvests from the demonstration farms. In the case of Ifugao, there are no/limited rice stocks in the CSBs, as first harvests will only be delivered later in 2019." In Lake Sebu, the demonstration farms showcased 54 traditional rice varieties, while in Ifugao, the Hungduan demonstration farms showcased 26, and 21 in Hingyon. There are some

data on which traditional rice varieties were being demonstrated, but no available data on which traits were being demonstrated to whom, and why. No data are available to the evaluators on varietal performance and if these are being monitored and assessed by the farmers and the project.

77. The evaluation of KII and FGD sessions indicated that the rice harvest from the demonstration farm had been low for unclear reasons. Some farmers in the evaluation's FGDs questioned the usefulness of the demonstration farms, while others acknowledged their potential added value for education and tourism. A few farmers complained that they donate their seeds but do not benefit from the harvest.

78. Demonstration farms are usually limited by one type of agroecology and do not represent the diversity of agroecologies from traditional rice use. It is unclear if the project considered alternatives. Some well-established good practices include having volunteer farmers, representing diverse agroecologies and practices, allocate a small plot of their farms for growing one or two test varieties. This can cover more diversity in agroecologies, customary practices and production systems. Furthermore, creating a community register (also known as a bio-register) of these decentralized alternative models is a low-cost demonstrative solution that also allows farmers to harvest the fruits of their own labour. Generally, farmers tend to place more trust in the farmers they know.

Finding 12. The project distributed farm tools and machineries (12 microtillers, 17 brushcutters, 17 micromills, 10 twinning machines and small farm tools) in Ifugao, plus 10 carabaos[14] for Lake Sebu. Since traditional rice farming is labour extensive, labour-saving devices might make sense. However, the evaluators could not access data or monitoring reports about testing, use and performance of these farm tools, machineries and carabaos. In the evaluation's FGD and KII sessions, the farmers unanimously provided critical feedback.

79. The evaluation of FGD sessions raised the following points: (i) The brushcutters were assessed favourably by the women farmers. (ii) There were great delays in the procurement and delivery of the farm machines, so the cropping seasons were missed. (iii) When the machines finally arrived, most of them were not suited for the environment and the users. The microtillers were so heavy that they sunk into the rice paddies, and the women could not operate them. In addition, the micromills were appropriate for the size of the modern rice grains but not for the traditional varieties. (iv) Further, the access to the 10 carabaos was limited and some of their locations were unknown to the farmers. The project's procurement document showed that the machineries were based on the technical specification indicated by the communities and were tested by the supplier prior to delivery to ensure that the machines work. However, farmers in the FGD sessions stated that the farm machineries were not tested by the communities themselves, prior to the distribution to the communities. This represents a fundamental project error whereby farmers, especially the women, should directly test and evaluate farm equipment prior to distribution.

[14] *Bubalus bubalis carabanesis* is a subspecie of a domesticated swamp buffalo that is native to the Philippines. Carabaos are used as draught animals in traditional agriculture, especially in land preparation for rice. Carabaos are also highly valued for their milk and meat, and are part of the country's popular culture.

Outcome 2.3. Enhanced and expanded knowledge among local decision makers and community members on the application of dynamic agrobiodiversity conservation practices and their relation to cultural heritage

Finding 13. The project has provided numerous training sessions, information sessions and mentoring to 118 LGU policy makers, planners and extension personnel on agrobiodiversity management options. The project also exceeded the target of providing numerous trainings to 2 513 farmers. The farmers in the FGD sessions assessed the training favourably. However, the evaluation cannot substantially verify if such capacity building activities resulted in the expansion and enhancement of knowledge on the application of agrobiodiversity conservation practices and their relation to cultural heritage for the following reasons.

80. There are no baselines nor farmer profiles for relative measurement. While the project regularly reported the figures from training sessions, attendance and topics, no specific or measurable targets on the "expansion and enhancement of knowledge on the application of agrobiodiversity conservation practices and their relation to cultural heritage" were provided. Also, no system of available evaluation and follow up on the actual results of the training was indicated. For example, the project reported high female participation from 50 to 100 percent, but there was no indication of such results.

81. Responding to the MTR recommendation, a training need analysis was carried out for all 17 projects sites on enterprise development. Despite highly diverse areas, diverse Indigenous Peoples and diverse cropping systems, the results of the training need analysis were almost the same for all project sites. There were no further details except for the following training topics: (i) marketing; (ii) production; (iii) finance; and (iv) organizational management. A major omission was the link to agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

82. The evaluators reviewed about 30 training materials.

    i. Training materials, including the farmer field school (FFS), reflected very basic training outlines, general objectives and a list of topics with very little or no description of the content. The FFS on traditional rice varieties included topics such as seed management, integrated pest management, production processes from land preparation to harvesting, agroecosystem analysis, nutrient management, organic agriculture, entrepreneurial skills, and only a mention of the concept and principles of agrobiodiversity. There was a training outline on the management of community seed banks. Most training materials had no clear articulation of the link to agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. For example, 17 topics in enterprise development mentioned methods to produce rice cookies, ginger and tomato candies, taro and banana chips, and a general outline of developing business plans. The training outline on the Climate Smart Farm Business School included topics such as climate change in agriculture, agroecosystem analysis, integrated pest management, crop production management, vegetable production, ruminants, free range native chickens, irrigation, rodent management, market surveys, harvest management and mushroom production. While a number of topics appear relevant, for example, integrated pest management and community seed bank management, others seem randomly provided, perhaps as part of the project co-financing. Mushroom cultivation, ruminants and free-range chicken have little direct relevance to the project.

ii. The training outlines were likely based on pre-existing materials usually conducted by the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Science and Technology and other agencies with seemingly little adaptation for an agrobiodiversity project. For instance, agricultural heritage sites and indigenous knowledge systems in agrobiodiversity management had very little coverage. The context of Indigenous Peoples' agrifood systems and gender analysis were not covered and likely did not reflect the process and content of the training. The content was dominated by crop production rather than agrobiodiversity conservation and use.

iii. The outlines did not include the pedagogical approach of the training to solicit and integrate the knowledge and experiences of the Indigenous communities on seed selection and storage, indigenous knowledge and agrobiodiversity as part of climate adaptation. They seemed to suggest a conventional training approach based on an expert providing knowledge to the trainees rather than participatory and experiential adult education. The evaluator's assessment is that the FFS outlines do not conform to FAO's FFS good guidance document (FAO, 2016a).

iv. The training approach did not include a training of trainers. This likely limited the potential for scaling out and building capacity for local trainers to conduct the training themselves. Further, this approach did not provide reliable reference material for the participants.

Outcome 2.4. Improved opportunities for local communities to derive economic, livelihood and food security benefits from agrobiodiversity conservation, resulting in increased sustainability of agrobiodiversity and ecosystem conservation practices

Finding 14. The financial viability of the agrobiodiversity enterprises has yet to be demonstrated since their implementation in 2018. The added value of these enterprises has not been established. The activities and results had limited correlation to agrobiodiversity conservation, and the enterprise did not show any link to promote market-based incentives for the sustainability of agrobiodiversity and ecosystem conservation practices. Given the low production and the lack of agrobiodiversity linkages, the project was not able to establish the benchmark of the consumers' willingness to pay (WTP). However, the project's scoping study showed that most consumers are keen to pay for eco-labelled products (around 26 percent of respondents were willing to pay a price premium of >21 percent for eco-labelled products), such as those certified to protect agrobiodiversity, indigenous varieties and cultural heritage (e.g. handwoven products from abaca) (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a).

83. A total of 612 Indigenous women farmers from the 17 pilot barangays have been involved in community enterprises through capacity building activities and marketing, and the use of producer labels. The project has facilitated the participation in one international, eight national, five provincial and seven municipal trade fairs and exhibits. From the evaluation's Most Significant Change exercise, 76 percent of the respondents indicated their appreciation of the enterprise activities. This includes training on food processing, packaging, marketing and entrepreneurship, as well as the setup of processing centres. One of the respondents said that the enterprise helped in supporting some of the financial needs of the family. Appreciation for the enterprise activities was also reiterated in the community FGD sessions.

84. The Project Implementation Report (PIR) stated that incomes have been raised. However, baseline income data are not yet available. The only reported income was from the trade fairs (totalling USD 9 676) and the sales of taro and banana chips, ginger and tomato candies, and tea (USD 296). There has been no available financial report on investment cost, volume of productions and sale, and profits or loses. Also, no report is available on

the source of capital investments from the project and the communities. It is also not clear how the reported income of USD 9 676 was used as additional capital for the enterprises and if this income only benefited the 612 Indigenous women. The lack of fundamental data puts into question the financial viability of the enterprises; it is not possible to tell if breakeven was achieved. There is also no analysis on any possible market distortion and its effect on the local financial landscape of the project's highly subsidized operations.

85. The FGD sessions indicated that the labels for the agrobiodiversity products came very late in 2020, resulting in a missed opportunity to "trademark" the products. Further, a review of the samples of the labelled products showed very little information to promote agrobiodiversity awareness (see Component 3, Finding 18, Paragraph 116).

86. The enterprise activities give the impression that these activities do not have a clear agrobiodiversity agenda and that they lack messaging. There is no innovation in the processing of cookies, candies and chips as these may fit both traditional and modern varieties. For example, the project took on the candy processing of hybrid tomatoes because, by chance, they saw a glut of unsold and unused harvest. While the candy processing could generally be a sound enterprise, there is no link to the project's objectives and focus on traditional varieties. Given the meagre progress in the enterprise activities and the lack of a tangible link to agrobiodiversity conservation, the evaluation questions the cost effectiveness of the project's standalone enterprises versus a collaboration with the many pre-existing and well-established social enterprises and cooperatives in the areas. The project did not consider the alternative of linking its beneficiaries and the agrobiodiversity messaging with these social enterprises and cooperatives.

Finding 15. The enterprise interventions for traditional rice varieties were based on untested assumptions and produced negligible results. The production and sale of rice cookies were cited as very low, while rice grain sales totalled only 200 kg in 2018. An enterprise scoping study was performed at the start of the project in 2016. Here, 62 percent of the interviewed farmers stated that their traditional rice varieties were largely allocated for home consumption (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a). They sold about 38 percent of their produce. As stated in the TOC section, the evaluators question the project's assumptions. Below are the findings from the evaluation's FGD and KII sessions.

87. The FGD sessions showed that the Indigenous Peoples continue to utilize rich agrobiodiversity for their food consumption, dietary diversity and livelihoods. Aside from field crops, vegetables and fruits from their farms and home gardens, they also gather plants in the wild. As part of their livelihood strategy, most of the Indigenous Peoples cultivate both traditional and modern varieties of rice. Farmers continue to value their traditional rice varieties and cultivate them. They are valued for their vastly superior taste, texture, colour and aroma, and as part of cultural identity. The growers also had experienced hunger and deprivation when running out of traditional varieties. The traditional rice varieties also generally command a higher market premium. In fact, for the project, the farmers were only willing to make rice cookies from the grains of the traditional rice varieties that were broken during the milling. The MTR had questioned the project's assumption that the loss of some traditional rice varieties was due to the lack of awareness and appreciation by the Indigenous Peoples or whether this is more a result of social and market changes.

88. The Indigenous Peoples and local leaders in the FGD sessions stated that yields of traditional rice varieties are not necessarily low. Instead, the main limitation of traditional

rice varieties is that most of them can only be planted once a year due to photoperiod sensitivity. While the land for rice production cannot be increased, the time to grow rice can be doubled. To increase their production and improve their income, they also plant modern varieties that feature a shorter growing season and can be planted twice a year. The Indigenous Peoples also cited climate change as a problem. There were times when it was simply impossible to grow traditional rice varieties due to severe water shortages. The short roots of the traditional rice varieties tend to make them highly sensitive to drought. They also mentioned the increase of pests and diseases affecting the traditional rice varieties.

89. Based on the above observations, the evaluators are of the opinion that the project missed the more holistic perspectives of the Indigenous Peoples' agrobiodiversity management. For instance, the duality of the rice-based economies of many local and Indigenous communities is that rice is grown for multiple purposes and as part of their livelihood strategy. They often grow both traditional and modern varieties. The landscape approach and the entirety of agrobiodiversity management would have tied into the NIAHS through conservation and use. The project's choice to increase production for marketing ignored the biological nature of the traditional rice varieties and the local land use systems. The project's conservation tactic leaned on storage in community seed banks rather than more dynamic conservation through a mix of on-farm conservation, varietal rehabilitation and improvement.

Finding 16. Component 3: the project has made contributions to increase awareness and knowledge among policy makers. Substantial progress has been made with regard to increasing awareness by integrating agrobiodiversity appreciation in school curricula. There is limited progress in consumer and public awareness. Potential for scaling up is likewise limited by the lack of materials (e.g. training modules, and the compilation and dissemination of information from field experiences to inform policy makers and other stakeholders).

The overall rating for Component 3 is Moderately Satisfactory.

Outcome 3.1. Increased knowledge and awareness among policy makers and practitioners about the full socioeconomic value of agrobiodiversity

Finding 17. Increased awareness among policy makers is manifested through policy proposals, resolutions, ordinances and funding commitments by national, municipal and local governments. This includes support for ecotourism.

90. In the absence of reliable indicators to measure increased awareness and knowledge among policy makers, the evaluators extrapolated that the project made a substantial contribution by combining: (i) the project's achievement of target activities on workshops and seminars; (ii) the engagement of stakeholders in national policy formulations (see Findings, Component 1); (iii) the passing of resolutions, ordinances and funding commitments at the municipal and local levels (see Finding 5); (iv) support to the agrobiodiversity conservation provided by the provincial tourism authority; and (v) the sense of ownership and commitment expressed by the local leaders in the evaluation's FGD and KII sessions. However, this extrapolation comes with a caveat as the evaluators have been unable to access the content or any report on the information workshops and seminars.

91. Awareness raising through integration of agrobiodiversity in school curricula has been tested and implemented in the two project provinces. The topics include agricultural

heritage sites, agrobiodiversity appreciation and indigenous knowledge. Indigenous Peoples have been taking crucial leadership roles in this educational activity. In addition, the project also linked agrobiodiversity conservation to the potential economic benefits of farm-based ecotourism. This was well received by the municipal and provincial authorities.

92. Women beneficiaries from Indigenous communities recognized that their knowledge and awareness were improved by the project. Women had a strong presence in the market trainings provided by the project. Of the community respondents to the evaluation's Most Significant Change exercise, 38 percent stated that the trainings and seminars enriched their knowledge and learning. Women farmers from the T'boli Indigenous Peoples of Lake Sebu said that the project enabled them to sell their farm products, which used to be an activity they shied away from. Another significant change was improved resource management at 9.5 percent. In particular, finding value in farm resources, which they would normally disregard and easily waste, was also mentioned.

Finding 18. Limited progress has been made on public and consumer awareness. The project has a disjointed communications objective and strategy, resulting in mixed messaging that did not fit the target audience nor the ambition. Resourcing and support for a key project component is limited to a part-time communications expert.

93. The project's FAO webpage is a top search result for *agrobiodiversity Philippines* and its designated website (Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry, n.d.) was visited by more than 150 000 visitors from September 2018 to November 2021. Among these, 14 percent were return visitors, almost 90 percent came from the Philippines and the rest from the United States of America, India, Canada and Singapore. With an 83 percent bounce rate, most visitors left the site without visiting a second page. They spent an average of three minutes on the page, which indicates that the visitors actually read the content. Although the project is near completion, some site links are still empty. There was no synergy with other partner institution websites to optimize audience reach and engagement. The FAO website has no link to the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research website. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau site for agrobiodiversity (Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, 2016b), which also performs well in search engines, has no link that directs traffic to the main Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research project website. In this regard, the project was unable to execute what it envisioned: a website with a summary, recommendations and direct links to participating private sector actors, particularly retailers, as well as key government institutions and civil society organizations as a marketing tool and as part of its consumer awareness activities (PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a).

94. The project's communications plan states that the objective is to strengthen advocacy and support for agrobiodiversity conservation among stakeholders through information dissemination and increased visibility. For policy makers, the face-to-face workshops and the project coordinating committee meetings served as the main communication and awareness raising channel. Other than a brief on the NIAHS, the project did not produce any information and policy guidance documents. The latter were expected as part of a communications plan aimed at re-enforcing policy objectives and raising awareness.

95. The project mistook raising awareness of agrobiodiversity for self-promotion. In fact, it developed a number of public communication materials such as road markers and product labels. Most are in English and promote the project rather than address agrobiodiversity.

For example, the product labels mention an heirloom variety but lack the key agrobiodiversity story. The product labels were more about the project and promoting the different institutions rather than the conservation of agrobiodiversity by Indigenous Peoples.

96. An example of mixed messaging and a missed target audience is the merchandizing 46-page module on traditional varieties. This is a good compilation of recipes and products made from traditional or heirloom crops from the project sites. This material can potentially market collaterals for consumer awareness to showcase the nutritional, cultural and ecological value of traditional varieties. Rather than consumers, it should target development partners, LGUs, project staff and national government agency partners.

97. Overall, as implemented, the project's consumer awareness campaign on the value of traditional varieties had weak planning with limited activities and results. A corresponding campaign plan, which should have included a baseline analysis, objectives, profiles of the target consumers, methods and ways of measuring success, has not been made. Except for participation in trade fairs and exhibits, efforts to reach out to consumers and raise their awareness have been very limited. As discussed in Paragraph 103, limited progress in enterprise development inevitably hindered consumer awareness. In addition, information about the enterprise products has been inadequate. Nutritional value details have yet to be drafted. The "Proudly ABD" labels were meant to indicate that the product came from traditional local varieties, was produced by Indigenous Peoples, and was an FAO, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research and GEF project. However, the public does not know that ABD stands for agrobiodiversity and why this should entail pride. In short, this was more about project promotion than increasing consumer awareness of agrobiodiversity. It showed the absence of a consumer awareness campaign plan and a clear communications strategy that aligns with the enterprise.

98. From the MTR, the evaluators noted statements from the project stakeholders that the definition of agrobiodiversity is too technical and academic. However, farmers can relate to its functional aspects. This includes the diversity of plant traits and varieties that are responsible for crop height, colour, pest resistance and taste. It involves the diversity of food crops for energy and health. Further, the abundance of diverse plants supports watersheds, which then provide water for the plants to grow. Many people in the Philippines directly feel the effect of climate change and can link it to agrobiodiversity loss. The project could have referred to FAO's useful agrobiodiversity materials, such as *Agrobiodiversity: A training manual for farmer groups in East Africa* (FAO, 2018b). So far, the project has had minimal public communication outputs and outreach to test among different audiences and ascertain what could work for dissemination, awareness raising and scaling up. Public outreach and testing messages for different audiences were not identified as project outputs or targets. However, these elements are prerequisites for the development and execution of impactful consumer awareness campaigns, which is an intended project output.

Outcome 3.2. Conditions created for further replication and scaling up of agrobiodiversity promotion in other parts of core provinces and regions

Finding 19. The prospects for scaling up lie in the project's remarkable achievements in uniting different institutions and establishing a model that permeates across national and local agencies. Alongside a successful institutional formation, scaling up entails establishing tools and evidence from the technical and enterprise components, which have been inadequate.

99. At the policy level, there are good prospects for scaling up and scaling out the project. The fragmentation or lack of coordination between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources with regard to agrobiodiversity is a known challenge for not only the Philippines but also many countries around the world. Therefore, the project's knowledge products and lessons can have global significance. The evaluation's stakeholder analysis (see Table 3) showed that FAO, through the project, has gathered an impressive array of key governmental institutions for implementing conservation and agrobiodiversity. Horizontally, the project has convened and facilitated cooperation among the key governmental institutions on environment (Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau), agriculture (Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research) and cultural heritage (NCIP). In addition, the government's various agricultural initiatives such as the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agricultural Research, Bureau of Plant Industry, Agricultural Training Institute and the Food, Agriculture and Fisheries Policy Division have provided technical and policy support. Vertically, the project has linked and coordinated with a rich array of stakeholders from the national, provincial (academia) and local levels primarily through the LGUs, which provided operational support via staff time, training, facility use, project funding and policy formulation. The project also represented a conduit for the Indigenous communities. This has created a strong sense of ownership and commitment among the stakeholders.

100. The project's institutional formation, vertically and horizontally, brought together different agencies that normally do not work together. Across sectors, this is a formidable scaffolding that advanced policy changes in support of agrobiodiversity. The institutional formation can be a model for similar projects to fast-track policies and programmes on agrobiodiversity. The formation has entailed management and coordination costs as different agencies also brought in their agenda and activities to leverage project support and vice versa. The downside was having to manage multiple 'nice to have' activities versus impactful ones that deliver on project objectives. The policy work, as indicated in the findings of Outcome 1, provided a potentially sustainable framework and policy tools to advance and leverage support for agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Working with schools fostered intergenerational engagement and knowledge continuity on the importance and value of agrobiodiversity and indigenous systems. On its own, this is a good building block to scale up the project. The support of the local government and the Department of Tourism on the ecotourism value of Indigenous Peoples' agrobiodiversity has provided potential for scaling up the project. The policy work, the work with schools and the link with ecotourism might broaden the reach of agrobiodiversity beyond the usual food and agriculture audience.

101. Another scaling up potential pertains to behavioural changes. This involves the new-found confidence of beneficiaries, which helped build their agency to market and lobby various institutions for support. From the Most Significant Change exercise, behavioural and attitude change, in particular improved self-confidence and self-worth, were identified by 24 percent of the respondents as a significant change brought by the project. Moreover, 19 percent mentioned that the project fostered and helped build their identity with other groups, and that they felt recognized by the government agencies. They said that the project provided opportunities to showcase their culture and to demonstrate how they adapt to changing times and modernization. They also valued being part of an organization and improving their organizational management (9.5 percent), plus the experience of

solidarity, teamwork and sense of community (4 percent). These findings were confirmed in the evaluation of FGD sessions.

102. As discussed in the Findings of Component 2, the technical results and field evidence on actual agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use were lacking. The planned knowledge sharing programme with 4 000 beneficiaries was not implemented. There are no practical tools like FFS modules, technical reports or a synthesis of experiences, which could have been used to inform and guide the scaling up.

103. Beyond the target sites, there was limited exploration of partnerships at a wider level and on a longer time scale, in part because of weaknesses in communications. The communications plan was not informed by research about the project's target audience, for example, the profile, values and motivations of specific consumer segments, to serve as a foundation and baseline in designing the marketing communications strategy, targeting behavioural change and tailoring messages.

Finding 20. In terms of achieving development objectives, the project's policy outcomes were impressive with good prospects of governmental approval. Nevertheless, the technical and communications outcomes showed major weaknesses. The policy, technical and communications components were weak in providing a POC for the TOC and towards achieving impact. The project has gained substantial ground in the institutional formation and policy engagement through the NIAHS and LIAHS. Once the LIAHS resolutions are signed in the three pilot municipalities, these will serve as instruments that can be used by the Indigenous Peoples, local communities and even the LGUs to leverage support for initiatives on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use as part of agricultural heritage systems. In addition, the LIAHS declarations operationalize the realization of the NIAHS as part of the Government of the Philippines' commitment to realizing its obligations to the CBD, as formulated in the *Philippine biodiversity strategic action plan* (Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, 2016a). The three pilot LIAHS can inspire similar initiatives to fulfil the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. The LIAHS is a strategic starting point and safety net for NIAHS development. The project contributes to operationalizing the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, even if no NIAHS policy is designed from multiple LIAHS. However, the project needs evidence-based models and credible tools to advocate for policy change and to implement agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. The meagre results from the field and technical interventions greatly restricted the progress to impact. The overall rating is Moderately Satisfactory.

3.3 Efficiency

Evaluation question 3. Efficiency – To what extent has the project been successful in using available resources (funds, personnel, expertise, equipment, etc.) to deliver results in the timeliest and least costly way possible?

The project's level of efficiency and cost effectiveness has been Moderately Unsatisfactory.

Finding 21. While activities and spending are on track, the project management lacked coherence in ensuring the correlation of the quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of the activities and outputs. The management had been largely driven by compliance in the reporting and procurement requirements. Although these aspects are important, the project has been unresponsive to some fundamental issues that affect the project's efficiency and effectiveness.

104. The project management did not follow sensible steps to ensure that procured infrastructures and farm equipment were actually fit for purpose. Therefore, the project

management was unable to adapt and improve the efficiency of project implementation. In terms of personnel, the project staff are highly committed. However, the project team lacked the crucial guidance and support of experts in the technical and social aspects of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. For a USD 13.7 million agrobiodiversity project, not having agrobiodiversity expertise within the team and at supervisory level is a major omission. This omission has been systemic since the project's inception, implementation and monitoring, and largely explains the gaps in the project's technical performance.

105. Overall, the project spending is relatively on track at 90 percent after a budget neutral extension. FAO, as the BH, provided reasonably efficient operational, administrative and financial management support. FAO provided backstopping support, but the competent technical expertise on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use is missing. FAO ensured that the project implementation adheres to GEF policies. FAO provided oversight and monitoring support, which had major shortcomings given the lack of competent technical and social expertise in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. The evaluation's KII sessions consistently expressed that the project implementation had been heavily directed by the PMCU's reporting compliance and was limited in responding and adjusting to the implementation challenges (see Question 2 on effectiveness and the section on monitoring).

106. The construction of all 17 community seed banks was on time and took place in early 2018. Thereafter, they were formally turned over to the respective LGUs. To facilitate compliance to FAO's procurement guidelines, the project provided uniform specifications for all 17 community seed banks. However, the uniform specification of all 17 did not leave adequate space for the Indigenous Peoples to adapt the design according to their needs and traditional practices of seed storage (see Question 2 on the effectiveness of the community seed banks).

107. There were considerable delays in staff recruitment. As the MTR pointed out, some delays were outside the control of the project. During project implementation, there were further delays with crucial project activities such as the procurement of farm equipment and machineries, and in the delivery of labels for the enterprise products.

108. The lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic significantly restricted operations and impacted timelines during the fifth and supposedly last year of project implementation (see further comments in Paragraphs 151 and 152).

109. In recognizing the challenges, a logical, chronological order of crucial diagnostic activities was a key factor in the project's timeliness. This should have taken place at the beginning of the project, not the end. The diagnostic activities should have informed the project's prognosis and implementation, and guided the project's monitoring and adaptive management. For example, the farmers' profiles and baseline incomes have yet to be completed, and the farmers still need to characterize their traditional rice varieties in order to define the conservation and sustainable use agenda. There are no plans in sight for the rest of the project's focus crops. The analysis of the nutritional content of the traditional varieties has yet to be completed and disseminated.

110. Cost effectiveness is highly questionable given the committed budget of USD 13 701 955 with 2 000 target beneficiaries. Even though the project expanded its capacity building

targets to 3 664 farmers, this is still far below the standard – even for a pilot. The evaluation of the third cycle of the Benefit Sharing Fund of the ITPGRFA (FAO, 2022) offers a term of comparison by a similar-sized budget of conservation and use projects and programmes. For USD 9.7 million, the programme enabled the formation of 270 partnerships to implement 20 projects in 43 participating countries. The multistakeholder and multicountry collaboration and capacity building delivered a huge number of PGRFA materials directly accessed by about 26 000 households of small holder farmers and Indigenous Peoples. About 80 community seed banks were supported and 20 706 varieties were characterized and tested for development and adaptation in multiple locations around the world. Further, 298 new varieties were selected and developed, and 5 933 accessions were planned for inclusion into the multilateral system of ABS. Aside from the policy and institutional formation achievements, the objectives and added value of the pilot activities were insufficiently planned and did not materialize: (i) There were no intended activities and outputs to analyse and model the POC on the dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, no POC to link heritage sites and protected territories to agrobiodiversity and no POC to promote market-based incentives for agrobiodiversity conservation. (ii) There were limited knowledge products (e.g. tools, evidence, publications) developed to enable the scale up of the project. (iii) A scale up pathway that could be technically replicable and adaptable without a large grant injection was not developed. (iv) The heavy investment in capacity building does not appear self-sustaining given the lack of training trainers, as well as usable and adaptable training materials. Last, and crucially, (v) the project's budget and operations were disproportional for a pilot. The evaluation's FGD and KII sessions with the members and leaders of the Indigenous communities found that "the budget seemed to be very big compared to what was delivered."

111. The project's policy component benefited from the senior expert consultant who worked effectively with key governmental institutions. While there is considerable expertise among the partner institutions, key technical and social expertise in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use is missing at FAO in terms of the leadership and decision-making that is needed for the project's strategic technical overview, redirection and adaptive management. From diagnosis and design to implementation and monitoring, this evaluation finds that the limited project results, particularly for Component 2, were largely due to severe technical weakness and a lack of key technical competence in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. For a complex, highly technical and operational project, the lack of agrobiodiversity expertise is a major, systemic omission. The LTO team's expertise included food safety and rice plant protection (see the section on monitoring).

112. Communications is a key project component and strategic intervention area for increased awareness of agrobiodiversity among policy makers and consumers. Compared to other FAO projects, this one has a designated communications person. Contrary to the MTR's emphasis on communications, the investment in communications personnel, as of December 2021, was limited to five to ten days per month to deliver 15 percent of total project expenditure. There also seems to be an absence of systems for oversight and quality control, as well as the evaluation of communication outputs and results. For instance, there are no systems in place to check the quality and effectiveness of the knowledge products nor the communications plan and outputs, including the communications link and support for Components 1 and 2. There is a lack of monitoring to indicate the effectiveness and efficiency of the communication products and platforms in disseminating information.

There also appears to be a lack of appreciation of the role of communications in supporting policy gains and mainstreaming agrobiodiversity for a wider audience. Communications-related work was viewed as either a non-priority or an afterthought.

3.4 Sustainability

Evaluation question 4. Sustainability – What are the prospects for sustaining the results beyond the project's closure? In particular, what systems are in place to environmentally, institutionally, financially, politically, culturally and socially sustain key activities? What is the prospect for scaling up the activities?

Overall rating: Moderately Likely

Finding 22. There are very good prospects of sustaining the project's results at the policy level given the institutional arrangements described in Question 2: Effectiveness Component 1. There are also some promising prospects on the financial front, given the commitments made by the local government. However, the lack of operational and financial viability of the enterprises, the lack of utility and clear objectives of the community seed banks and the demonstration farms and their continuous operation and maintenance alongside unclear community interventions, pose significant risks to the sustainability of the infrastructures, the interventions and the pilots as a whole.

113. The political prospects are uncertain given the national and local elections in May 2022. This is clearly beyond the project's scope of influence. The cultural and social prospects are dependent on two interrelated factors. On the one hand, there is a strong sense of ownership and commitment from the project beneficiaries, specifically Indigenous women. On the other hand, the number of beneficiaries has been very low, even for a pilot project. To sustain the project results, the possible risks of elite capture could have been avoided by deliberately expanding the number of beneficiaries who can access the project's resources and services.

114. The project has drafted an exit plan, which is also intended as a sustainability plan. Positively, the Department of Agriculture's Office of the Under Secretary of Operations has agreed to be the project's institutional host upon its completion. This is not without risks, however, given that the Philippine national election will likely lead to changes in key government officials and priorities. Aside from this, the draft exit plan is composed of a number of activities and outputs for handing the project over to the respective government institutions. There is no analysis on the quality of what will be turned over and if these are viable products, for example, the extension modules development that will be linked to the FFS. However, as stated in Question 2: Results Component 2, the training modules have been mere outlines, and the project has not reported on the quantity and quality of the FFS modules. The community seed banks have already been legally handed over to the respective Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry, LGUs and Office of the Municipal Agriculturist. However, given the concerns raised under Effectiveness, Outcome 2, it is unclear if these are viable products and if there are sufficient local capacities and a sufficient need to actually operate and maintain the community seed banks of Indigenous Peoples. Given the ESS risks (Finding 32), the project's planned transfer of the traditional rice varieties characterization and the respective data base to PhilRice, the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry and the University of the Philippines may not be covered by the project's FPIC MOA.

115. It is not possible to draft a sensible scale up pathway for the project unless the fundamental technical weaknesses are addressed. The eventual implementation of the policy component needs to be informed by the technical component, while the policy component needs to support the technical component. The pathway would also be dependent on the project's analysis and modelling of how to dynamically conserve and use agrobiodiversity that tangibly and equitably benefits Indigenous Peoples. The modelling should be evidence based, technically and socially robust on agrobiodiversity, and include a reflection on the processes and lessons learned.

116. The policy, planning and governance results have demonstrated the catalytic role of the project in addressing institutional fragmentation in the conservation and use of agrobiodiversity. GEF's institutional and governance additionality lies in the convening of key stakeholders in agriculture, environment and culture from global, national, provincial and local levels. FAO did not leverage its technical expertise in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use alongside this institutional and governance model. The minimal results of the community seed banks and the enterprises did not demonstrate the project's added value to agrobiodiversity conservation and use. Given the project's technical weakness, GEF's global environmental additionality has yet to be established.

3.5 Factors affecting performance

Evaluation question 5. Factors affecting performance – What is the prospect for scaling up the activities? What are the factors that facilitated and hindered the effectiveness of the project, including monitoring and evaluation, quality of implementation, quality of execution, financial management and mobilization of co-financing, project partnership and stakeholder engagement, knowledge management, communications, public awareness and progress to impact?

Overall rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory

Finding 23. Factors affecting performance: there have been major gaps and oversight at systems level in project design, implementation and monitoring. FAO executed and supervised a highly technical and complex project without the fundamental technical and social expertise, and missed opportunities for adaptive management. The project design did not provide for the technical feasibility of major project components such as of the community seed banks and did not include a financial feasibility and an operational business model for the enterprises. For a complex and technical agrobiodiversity project, it did not have the necessary agrobiodiversity expertise for implementation and execution. The internal project execution from the PMCU to the Project Task Force (PTF), the LTO and the FLO was largely driven by reporting compliance rather than results. The project's consistently low technical performance was neither flagged by the PMCU nor spotted at the FAO supervision level. Report approvals have been provided, despite the consistent lack of vital technical data.

Finding 24. M&E system: overall, the M&E system regularly kept track of the activities, spending levels and some outputs. Project monitoring has major incoherence with project plans and results delivery. In terms of monitoring implementation, there were significant gaps in the supervision and technical backstopping provided by FAO at systems level. The project's weak technical performance seems to have gone unnoticed. There appear to have been no actions taken in response to the ESS risk raised in the MTR. There was no critical reflection based on monitoring data that could have led to adaptation or a change in project activities, which is the fundamental function of monitoring and evaluation. The monitoring and evaluation system is Moderately Unsatisfactory.

117. The project has made use of its monitoring and evaluation systems largely through biannual reports using GEF's Project Implementation Report (PIR) template, the project progress report (PPR) and project visits. From FAO, the PIR and PRR were reviewed and signed by the project coordinator from the PMCU, the LTO and the FLO. The PIR and the PPR are useful instruments to progressively track project implementation, matching its activities through a cumulative percentage that is rated accordingly. The monitoring is largely activity based, except for the policy and ordinances, publications and the number of rice varieties. The documents are voluminous. With each report averaging about 100 pages excluding annexes, these could be tedious to write and read.

118. Activity, output and outcome indicators are consistently monitored through the PIR and PRR. The indicators for the outcome and output tables are actually activities with no link to quality. For example, the number of women in training was reported, but there are no details as to the quality, technical and financial results of this. There was, however, useful information on the perception of women's improved self-confidence.

119. The planned activities were generalized. It has not been easy to track how the accomplished activities are actually related to the objectives and plan. For example, the reported training on goat rearing and the distribution of goats do not show a correlation to the project's objectives and plan. There was very meagre reporting, and there was no mention of important crops such as banana, eggplant and mung bean.

120. The reports do not have a coherent logic in the chronology of activities, as indicated in Question 3: Efficiency. It is highly problematic that diagnostic activities for the first year are to be conducted in the fifth year and likely completed in the sixth, after two consecutive budget neutral extensions of the project.

121. The project's reported activities and correlation to the vital technical data from the field implementation are not available to the evaluators or the technical working group. As indicated in Question 2: Effectiveness, Component 2, there were meagre data on the utilization of the community seed banks and demonstration farms, as well as no data on enterprise business operations and the use of farm machineries. None of these problems were included in the PRR and PIR.

122. The financial report is based on expenditure levels, however, the implementation of monitoring did not track specific expenditures to the actual delivery of outputs and had no reference to basic quality control. For example, the PPR 2020 reported that the project in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute had allocated USD 79 911 for the development of the FFS modules on agrobiodiversity crops, and that the FFS training had been rolled out. The FFS modules reviewed by the evaluation team are only training outlines and not modules.

123. The tracking of target beneficiaries has been weak in terms of specifying the diversity of Indigenous Peoples, the number of trainings per individual and their feedback on the projects. The number direct target beneficiaries is very low at 2 000. The project did not consider the extent of its direct and indirect beneficiaries such as students, the households of the direct beneficiaries (if there is indeed significant contribution from the enterprise for family income), other farmers who are sources of materials for processing, and potential beneficiaries of the policy and legal work. There is also no measure of audience reach, which is an indication of ROI for the communication materials developed.

3.5.1 Quality of implementation

Finding 25. Quality of implementation: there have been major gaps from FAO Philippines as the executing agency in oversight and supervision. It is unclear how some changes in project design and implementation were duly communicated and approved. It was unclear as to who had oversight on quality standards, and there seems to be no reference to this to ensure good technical performance and results. Taking on the final responsibility to address problems and redirect the project did not happen. The quality of implementation is Moderately Unsatisfactory.

124. The project's LTO and FLO are both based in the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP), Bangkok. The LTO reviewed and provided technical assistance to the project team, reviewed reports and knowledge products, and monitored the technical implementation and overall concurrence with expectations of donors, beneficiaries and government agencies. The LTO, however, is not an agrobiodiversity expert. The FLO provided monitoring support and oversight. The support included reviewing and approving progress reports, annual project implementation reports, financial reports and budget revisions. The LTO and the FLO did not seem to raise any issues nor flag concerns throughout the course of implementation and monitoring. Or if they did, there was no documentation shared with the evaluators and no follow through. The roles of the LTO and the FLO are advisory with the Project Steering Committee (PSC) as the deciding body and the PMCU as the operational body. At the same time, it is unclear if the PMCU proactively reached out to the LTO and the FLO for added support. Overall, the BH has the final responsibility to address critical problems as they arise.

125. During project implementation, there were staff changes specifically for the BH and the LTO. While staff turnover occurs in organizations, a systematic hand over, orientation and undertaking of full responsibilities on behalf of the incoming staff may have been inadequate.

126. There were changes in the project plans, and the due process of notice, approval, documentation and reporting was unclear. First, some of the project plans were dropped. The landscape approach, which is an important aspect of the project's work in protection and heritage sites, was dropped. For crops, there were no activities or reference to the conservation and sustainable use of eggplant and mung beans. There were no reports on banana, taro or yam, other than that they could be planted around community seed banks or turned into chips for the enterprises. There was no report on the conservation and use of Manila hemp (abaca), and the rationale and results of the three micropropagation chambers. Second, other activities, which were not part of the original plan, were included. However, it is unclear how these activities related to the project's objectives. These activities include the processing of hybrid tomatoes into candies and the distribution of goats. While project changes are expected and even important, these changes need due diligence in terms of assessment, approval, documentation and reporting.

127. The project reporting, supervision and oversight did not reference quality standards. For example, the numerous training materials for the FFS modules did not refer to FAO's FFS guidelines or gender and social inclusion. When the project reported that they had addressed the threat to agrobiodiversity through *in situ* and *ex situ* samples, these did not measure up to the guidelines from FAO's Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Benefit Sharing Fund of the ITPGRFA or GEF's numerous guidelines.

128. There were major gaps in the checks and balances among the PMCU, the BH, the LTO and the FLO. Outside the PMCU and at the corporate level of FAO Philippines, the annual reports for the past four years have included the project's progress. While there are other FAO projects within the same project areas, including GEF-funded projects, the FAO country report did not include any links to these other projects. For example, they did not discuss how they complement each other and if they have the same beneficiaries. In addition, with a heavy workload of simultaneously monitoring about 60 projects, the national monitoring and evaluation specialist for FAO Philippines can only monitor at the basic level of compliance and integration with the FAO Philippines annual reporting.

129. Overall, the execution and use of the monitoring and supervision system is generally restricted to the enumeration of activities. In addition to the MTR, there were monitoring and supervision visits from the PMCU, the LTO and the FLO. However, the evaluators did not have access to the monitoring and supervision reports and therefore could not assess the value of these visits. Among the PMCU, FAO Philippines and FAO RAP, there was no indication of monitoring the quality and technical rigour of the project's performance to provide coherence and a strategic overview, raise concerns over major gaps in data and performance, and redirect and adapt as necessary. Hence, the necessary checks and balances for quality assurance had significant gaps.

3.5.2 Quality of execution

Finding 26. Quality of execution: the activities related to contracts and procurements, approval and start up were executed relatively well. Despite the challenges and limitations of COVID-19, the project adapted reasonably well. The quality of execution was Moderately Satisfactory.

Finding 27. Climate change has been identified as a risk for adaptive management. Ifugao has been affected by a rise in environmental hazards such as flooding. The evaluation's FGD and KII sessions, however, indicate that the communities were not affected. Therefore, the value of the community seed banks as part of a community response has not been tested. The project team experienced considerable difficulties due to the challenges posed by COVID-19. The project's mode of operations and implementation was adjusted reasonably well.

130. The first wave of COVID-19 hit the Philippines in March 2020, which was the fifth and supposedly last year of a 4-year project. Zoom meetings and telephone calls facilitated the adjustment. Local community meetings became less frequent with fewer participants. In terms of care for staff, partners and beneficiaries, FAO Philippines activated a health and safety protocol, and observed community quarantine guidelines that reflected those of the Government of the Philippines. The team was also guided by FAO and supported by FAO RAP.

131. There is no doubt that COVID-19 caused considerable implementation difficulties, especially given the remoteness of the project areas and the erratic quality of internet connectivity. The pandemic seemed to have hit the project particularly hard due to earlier operation and monitoring inefficiencies. The evaluators do not share the opinion of the PMCU that the low stock and utilization of the community seed banks, low performance of the demonstration farms, low production of the enterprises and low levels of outputs in knowledge products and communication was due to the pandemic. The weak technical and communications performance was consistent in the first four years of project operations, prior to the pandemic. If the activities had been fully operational on the ground, then there would have been fewer barriers to project completion, as the field operations could have functioned autonomously with remote monitoring and check-ins. The lockdown

could have caused fewer disruptions between the project areas and the project personnel at FAO Philippines.

3.5.3 Financial management and mobilization of expected co-financing

Finding 28. As of October 2021, the co-financing delivered was at 47.65 percent of what had been committed (see the co-financing table in Appendix 4). The co-financing came, mostly in-kind, as part of regular programming and budget allocations of partner national government agencies and LGUs. The co-financing, estimated at almost USD 5.5 million, is so far double that of the GEF grant at USD 2.1 million. This is an indication of the leveraging power of FAO and the project. It also reflects the Government of the Philippines' commitment to support agrobiodiversity, particularly on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Nevertheless, about 50 percent of the co-financing did not materialize as government agencies had to prioritize the COVID-19 response. There is an unofficial commitment from the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry to provide post-project support for the community seed banks and demonstration farms, as well as a commitment from schools to continue module testing and development. The co-financing that materialized came from the good institutional arrangement and expressed commitment of the various partner agencies. There were resolutions and commitment documents to support co-financing by the different institutions. The financial management and mobilization of expected co-financing was Moderately Satisfactory.

3.5.4 Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement (including the degree of ownership of project results by stakeholders)

Finding 29. To a large extent, project partnership and stakeholder engagement have been satisfactory in establishing multi-institutional partnerships and collaboration among key stakeholders, including civil society organizations and the private seed industry (see Table 3). As discussed in Finding 19, the project brought together key institutional actors at the national and local levels. In these processes, the key institutional actors were also motivated to support enabling policies. The project contributed to the integration and synergy of key policy frameworks and laws that fall under the agriculture, environment and natural resources sector, and that involve Indigenous Peoples, cultural heritage and local governance. The evaluation's counterfactual interviews with agrobiodiversity experts and actors confirmed inclusive policy consultations at national levels. The institutional formation of project coordinating committees from the national, provincial and local levels was catalytic in the successful achievement of policy objectives and a strong sense of ownership among all stakeholders. There were gaps in engaging Indigenous Peoples (see ESS), but the evaluation recognizes that the project also helped stimulate and revive indigenous organizations and their leadership potential, and built agency to enable their engagement. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement have been Satisfactory.

3.5.5 Knowledge management, communications and public awareness

Finding 30. The project's knowledge management was moderately unsatisfactory. First, the project did not have a system to track fundamental project data. This would have not only informed performance but also served as a prerequisite for developing knowledge products and, eventually, evidence if the proposed TOC works. Second, the three main components of the project lacked coherence in the proper functioning of knowledge management. While the different components were designed to inform each other, the actual links were minimal. Component 1 was strong and based on sound expertise but was not substantially informed by on-the-ground experiences from

Component 2. Component 3 produced inadequate knowledge products[15] such as technical reports, policy briefs and published articles (FAO, 2021), which could have provided the project with a much-needed technical peer review and a solid basis for raising public awareness. Third, despite a considerable budget allocation for capacity building and module developments, the delivered outputs merely reflect training outlines – with the exception of the school curricula for formal education. These are inadequate as reference training materials and cannot be used for successive trainings by the project stakeholders. This also cannot contribute to public goods for similar FAO and GEF undertakings. Fourth, there have been minimal reflection and analysis on the project's technical progress and how the pilots need major reshaping to form substantive and scalable models that respond to the project's core objectives. As such, there are few knowledge products that would serve as guides for scaling up. Fifth, except for a few publications, the project does not have a system to capture, test, share and act on lessons learned. Sixth, there is no link or mutual reinforcement between knowledge management and communications. Seventh, FAO did not leverage its technical expertise and considerable knowledge products on agrobiodiversity to guide the project's knowledge management and production.

3.6 Gender and cross-cutting issues

Evaluation question 6. Cross-cutting: To what extent have equity, gender and social inclusion, including Indigenous Peoples (IP) been taken in account in the design and implementation of the project? To what extent has the project taken environmental and social concerns into consideration in its design and implementation (is the project in line with its Environmental and Social Safeguards plan)?

Overall rating: Moderately Unsatisfactory

Finding 31. To a considerable extent, the project's ability to take gender and social inclusion into account in the design and implementation has been moderately satisfactory. The target beneficiaries are entirely Indigenous and largely women who are well represented in participant selection and leadership. The youth are actively engaged in the project through the inclusion of agrobiodiversity awareness in the school curricula. The achievements in improving the women's self-confidence and self-worth are important steps towards defining a transformative agenda that would address gender and social inclusion in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Deeper analysis reveals that there were still limitations in social inclusivity. This involved limited Indigenous Peoples' engagement and inclusion of their knowledge and practices in field interventions. Further, there was no gender analysis to inform gender appropriate interventions, and there was a lack of knowledge products and participation.

132. The Most Significant Change exercise revealed behavioural and attitudinal change. In particular, the participants felt that engagement in the project improved their self-confidence and self-worth. The project fostered and helped build their identity with other groups, and they felt recognized by government agencies. For instance, the project provided opportunities to present their culture and show how they adapt to changing

[15] In the January 2021 presentation of preliminary evaluation results to the FAO PTF, evaluators were provided with communication materials intended for 'wider public.' There were five press coverages related to agrobiodiversity, articles and community stories in the FAO newsletter, and a project video. The specific target audience was unclear. On more technical reports, the evaluators were initially provided with only one policy brief, the Joint Memorandum Circular Brief V4 with no clear distribution record, and some project experiences in case studies and FAO publications for an international audience, e.g. *Wiphala paper on indigenous food systems* and *Indigenous youth as agents of change*. There were also some infographics, product and bag labels, and popularized studies in the form of presentations, as well as draft reports.

times and modernization. Others mentioned significant changes in improved resource management, especially in finding value from farm resources that would normally be disregarded. They also value being part of an organization and improving their organizational management. Actual participation, however, has been rather low at roughly 2 000 direct beneficiaries. Hence, only a limited number of Indigenous communities can access the goods and services provided by the project.

133. Regarding gender, the project consistently used gender disaggregated data to monitor the number of female participants. However, the lack of farmer profiles and vulnerability assessments also means that women's profiles and vulnerability assessments have not been drafted. These data are specific to the project's interventions. The lack of a gender analysis means that gender issues are missing from the training materials. Moreover, the project's agrobiodiversity conservation and use objective is not systematically informed by women's needs and trait preferences.

134. To a limited extent, the project has been able to tap into and leverage the indigenous knowledge on agrobiodiversity conservation and use. The project has documented and respected the local customs and rituals on traditional crop production. Nonetheless, the project's outputs in terms of community seed bank management have not adequately leveraged indigenous knowledge on seed selection and storage. Further, the community seed banks did not consider traditional household practices of seed storage, which should be complemented – not replaced – by the community seed banks. A major concern of the evaluation is that the Indigenous Peoples' (encyclopaedic) knowledge on folk taxonomy and ethnobotany has not been prioritized in the characterization of the collected traditional rice varieties. Instead, the researchers of the partner institutions characterized the traditional rice varieties based on the Bioversity International descriptors (Bioversity International, n.d.). While scientific knowledge is highly useful for the project, this should complement indigenous knowledge.

135. Most communication materials and knowledge produced by the project adequately acknowledge the different institutions. For example, the FAO, GEF and Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research logos are prominent on the cover or first pages of presentations and publications. However, none of these materials explicitly acknowledged the ICC/IP as equal knowledge holders of the project's knowledge products, and they are not cited as authors or publishers. The FPIC MOA with the ICC/IP of Hingyon and Hungduan has provisions for joint rights on all works and materials, while that of Lake Sebu has provisions requiring that the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research provide communities with a copy of the final, approved version of the project's output. The Lake Sebu FPIC MOA monitoring committee report from September 2021 stated that the project has not complied with this provision.[16]

136. At the field level, there is a high level of ownership and participation among the Indigenous communities and their leaders. The FGD sessions noted that communication and coordination with the PMCU can be sporadic, and that a number of activities were held on short notice. Participants also cited that they were only involved in the technical activities

[16] NCIP XII. 2021. MOA Monitoring Committee report Re: Dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in traditional agro-ecosytems of the Philippines (Rice Plus Project) of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research in the barangays of Klubi, Lamcade, Lamfugon, Luhib and Tasiman, all in the municiplaity of Lake Sebu, province of South Cotabato.

(Component 2) and were neither consulted nor involved in policy issues (Component 1). The lack of Indigenous Peoples' participation in policy issues that directly concern them, their territories and agrobiodiversity is an important omission. Better involvement could have strengthened the links of Component 2, technical activities, with Component 1, policy activities.

Finding 32. ESS: there has been a systemic weakness in assessing, monitoring and addressing risks associated with the ESS. The original 2015 ESS were wrongly categorized as low risk. When the 2019 MTR raised the ESS 2 risk from low to medium, the PMCU, the BH, the LTO and the FLO did not appear to acknowledge or understand the risk as they took no steps to address it. Since then, and at the time of the evaluation, the risk has escalated to high in the view of the evaluators. This elevated ESS risk concerns: (i) the lack of provisions for the project to externally collect, store, characterize and register samples of plant genetic resources of indigenous and endemic varieties grown by Indigenous Peoples and their associated traditional knowledge; (ii) the lack of ABS provisions for the Indigenous communities; (iii) a possible violation of the FPIC MOA; and (iv) a possible non-compliance with the project's legal and moral obligations under international agreements such as the CBD, ITPGRFA, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997 (The Republic of the Philippines, 1997). The ESS is Unsatisfactory.

137. Regarding biodiversity, the November 2015 ESS wrongly assessed that the project had the ABS measures in place. In 2015, the project had not conducted the FPIC, and there were no ABS measures. In addition, the ESS wrongly assessed that no Indigenous Peoples were involved when, in fact, almost all of the beneficiaries were Indigenous and the project areas were protected heritage sites, subject to the territorial rights of Indigenous communities.

138. In 2019, the MTR noted that the project collected and externally stored samples of indigenous and endemic varieties of crops grown by Indigenous Peoples and their associated traditional knowledge. The MTR pointed out the need to clarify whether a separate legal agreement was needed beyond the FPIC. It referred to concerns raised by the Indigenous communities on the lack of ABS mechanisms. The MTR raised the ESS from low to medium. FAO Philippines, including FAO-GEF, neither acknowledged nor acted on these risks.

139. In 2019[17] and 2020,[18] agrobiodiversity experts in the technical working group repeatedly raised serious concerns that (i) Indigenous communities should only be assisted to collect their own rice samples; (ii) stored duplicates in the PhilRice genebank were solely for safekeeping and "should be left untouched"; and that (iii) "the farmers can sue if the varieties that they had stored with PhilRice were used by anyone else without their permission." The PMCU, the PTF and FAO Philippines neither acknowledged nor acted on this risk, mentioning that it was not on the MTR's list of priority recommendations for management response. The evaluation does not see this as a valid point considering the ESS is a significant part of project management within FAO and the FAO-GEF coordinating unit.

140. Based on meeting minutes and as confirmed by the evaluation's KII, the technical working group assumed that a "blackbox agreement" had been made between the Indigenous

[17] 2nd technical working group meeting minutes. 29 July 2019.

[18] 3rd technical working group meeting minutes. 29 January 2020.

communities and PhilRice. A blackbox arrangement in gene banking essentially entails that seeds from an original collection (in this case, the seeds of the traditional rice varieties of the Indigenous communities of Ifugao and Lake Sebu) are duplicated for safe keeping in a host genebank, that is, PhilRice. The blackbox arrangement implies that the seeds and their data cannot be accessed by the host genebank.

141. Notwithstanding, the project did not address the ESS risk associated with the *ex situ* collection and storage of rice samples. It characterized and registered more rice samples, and added further crops. The project reported that PhilRice has characterized nearly 70 percent of 165 traditional rice varieties (FAO-GEF, 2021). It is unclear how such a characterization would be compatible with the reported blackbox arrangement.

142. Furthermore, the project endorsed submissions for the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry registration of the characterized cultivars (13 rice, 1 abaca, 1 maize and 2 banana). The project did not indicate under whose names and under what conditions these are registered. The Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry registration of traditional crop varieties requires sample duplication in the genebank, and it is unclear whether the blackbox arrangement already serves this purpose. It is also unclear who grants access to the duplicate accessions in the absence of an MTA between source communities/Indigenous Peoples and the genebank. In addition, the characterization of the Manila hemp (abaca) and banana had not been reported earlier. The inclusion of maize for registration was a surprise for the evaluation team as this crop is not covered by the project.

143. When these issues were raised, the PMCU responded that the *ex situ* collection, storage, characterization, registration and ABS are covered under the FPIC MOA and are preconditions for the three municipal sites. The evaluators could only access all FPIC MOA documents on 31 January 2022.

144. The evaluators' analysis of the FPIC MOA and preconditions for the three municipal sites is outlined here.

i. The FPIC MOA contained provisions for the following:
   - The collection and storage of traditional rice and other crop varieties are for the use of the community seed banks. This explicitly implies that all plant materials remain within the communities.
   - The project's research is to be used solely for policy inputs.
   - Any other activity outside the FPIC MOA requires a new FPIC agreement. The current FPIC MOA is non-transferable and any waiver must be in writing.
   - The access provision was solely for the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research and partners, and is limited to the project's activities and research outputs.
   - The community benefits referred only to farm equipment, community seed banks and trainings, but not the access and use of traditional plant varieties.
   - The Hingyon and Hungduan communities and the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research have joint rights to all works and materials resulting from the research, whether or not the same is published or communicated in any medium. Lake Sebu has provisions requiring that the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research

provide communities with a copy of the final, approved version of the project output.

ii. The FPIC MOA did not contain provisions for nor reference to:
- the collection, storage, characterization and registration of plant genetic resources for the *ex situ* activities;
- any form of MTA as specified by ITPGRFA, for example; and
- an ABS sharing mechanism as defined by the CBD, the ITPGRFA and the GEF.

145. Furthermore, the project stated that the project document (PRODOC) mentioned the *ex situ* activities. The FPIC MOA, however, did not refer to this, nor was the project's PRODOC attached to the FPIC MOA. It is also doubtful that the 171-page English document could constitute a basis of information duly addressed to the ICC/IP.

146. The project may not have fully complied with key provisions of the FPIC MOA which, in principle, were set to protect community rights over seeds, knowledge and ancestral domains. This may violate the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997 (The Republic of the Philippines, 1997). Within the technical working group, possible FPIC shortfalls were discussed but not acted upon. In the fifth technical working group's meeting notes, a representative from PhilRice asked if the FPIC would be negatively affected if there is a molecular analysis of the collected varieties. The FAO technical officer responded that the project allows for molecular analysis. This advice was provided, and perhaps a decision was made, without consulting the NCIP. It also neglected social inclusion.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. Relevance: the project's multi-institutional and multilevel approach to conserve globally important agrobiodiversity within protected areas and agricultural heritage sites remains highly relevant and innovative. This is relevant not only for the Philippines but all contracting parties of the CBD and the ITPGRFA. The project design to address institutional fragmentation in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use enabled effective policy engagement among the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and other stakeholders from national, regional and local levels. At the same time, the project was gravely challenged by the complexities of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use, which required technical and social rigour in terms of design and adaptation.

Conclusion 2. Effectiveness: the project played a catalytic role by enabling and contributing to the multi-institutional and multilevel agrobiodiversity policy processes, laws and outcomes, significantly delivering on GEF's institutional and governance additionality. In contrast, there were meagre results from on-the-ground pilot interventions. Hence, the promising institutional prospects of scaling up are restricted by the lack of scalable technical outputs and knowledge products (e.g. tools, models and training modules) that could demonstrate success and convince further commitments and investments beyond the project areas. In this regard, GEF's global environmental benefits have been limited.

Conclusion 3. Effectiveness: the project did not appropriately consider the duality of the Indigenous Peoples' traditional production systems. In fact, their livelihood strategy includes both the traditional and modern rice varieties. The project's conservation and use tactic was restricted to storing and planting varieties, but it did not integrate the more strategic aspects of: (i) conserving the genes through varietal improvement and adaptation to climate change; (ii) supporting the smallholder farming systems with their multiple rationales and complex agrobiodiversity management where the plant genes evolve; and (iii) uniting the policy and technical work to strengthen the systems that maintain and create diversity for climate resilient food and agriculture.

147. The project's tactic for agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use was narrowly anchored on enhancing the project's perceived value of traditional rice varieties through: (a) increased production; (b) more marketing; and (c) greater seed storage. This ignored the photoperiod sensitivity of traditional rice varieties that are limited to only one growing season. Hence, (a) increased production is limited without more land for production. The latter is rather unfeasible and undesirable. Further, (b) more marketing alone would lead to the conservation and production of more marketable traditional varieties, which might wipe out the other less marketable varieties. Ultimately, the project's conservation strategy has mainly leaned on (c) greater seed storage in the community seed banks and the national gene bank, with limited results.

148. Contrary to the project's assumption, the high preference of Indigenous Peoples to consume rather than sell their traditional rice varieties seems to be the ultimate proof of value of the superior quality of the traditional varieties. The Indigenous Peoples value their traditional rice so much that their sense of hunger and deprivation is associated with running out of supply for consumption. At the same time, the Indigenous Peoples grow modern varieties to have two cropping seasons and therefore increased production for

marketing. The project's assumption runs contradictory to the Indigenous Peoples' apparent logic of choice to "eat quality, sell quantity."

149. The project did not consider alternatives or complementary activities that could potentially broaden the concept and practice of dynamic conservation and sustainable use like trait regeneration, varietal enhancement or even participatory plant breeding. Support for the crop improvement of traditional cultivars has received limited attention from conventional research. The project did not use a systems approach, which could have not only maintained but also generated value by improving and creating agrobiodiversity for climate resilient food and agriculture.

Conclusion 4. Effectiveness: the project achieved considerable headway in raising awareness of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use among policy makers from national to local levels, and in schools at the provincial level. This was evidenced by the development and passing of supportive policies and a number of realignments of existing government programmes to support agrobiodiversity. The development and uptake of agrobiodiversity awareness in school curricula with Indigenous Peoples taking leadership roles serve as a good model to engage the youth. In contrast, very little was achieved in raising awareness among the public and consumers on the importance of agrobiodiversity and why conservation and sustainable use are needed.

Conclusion 5. Effectiveness: FAO did not leverage its technical expertise on agrobiodiversity management, despite FAO's numerous programmes and flagship publications on the topic, and its hosting of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the ITPGRFA. FAO also failed to leverage its technical expertise in research, data management, analysis and modelling. As a consequence, the technical quality of the project design and implementation, as well as its outputs and outcomes, were substantially affected while its prospects for scaling up was restricted. Moreover, the project's innovative concept that had tapped into agrobiodiversity conservation at genetics and farm-to-landscape levels was not utilized towards GEF's global environmental additionality.

Conclusion 6. Efficiency: planning and monitoring are primarily activity-based. These are not guided by a results framework or a systems perspective that connects project management to project objectives. Project management is mainly driven by compliance in reporting and procurement. A system is lacking to ensure that activities and outputs are fit for purpose and are of quality, timely and cost-effective. In terms of personnel, the project staff and consultants, in particular those of the PMCU, are hardworking and highly committed. However, they lacked the crucial guidance and support of experts in the technical and social aspects of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. This is a major and systemic omission for a complex and large-scale agrobiodiversity project with the ICC/IP.

150. The "efficiency" in having a uniform specification for the procurement of all 17 community seed banks was inappropriate for the highly diverse agroecologies and farming systems, and the needs and preferences of the diverse Indigenous Peoples.

151. Except for the positive policy delivery, the project's cost effectiveness is highly questionable. First, the scale of operation and budget are disproportional for the pilot activities. Second, the budget of USD 13 701 955 is disproportionate to the very low target of 2 000 beneficiaries and the limited delivery of knowledge products from the pilot undertakings. For instance, there were no intended activities and outputs to analyse and model the POC on the dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the field. There was no POC to link heritage sites and protected territories to agrobiodiversity, and no scale up developed, apart from the policy pathway. Knowledge products (e.g. tools,

evidence, learning modules and publications) to enable knowledge sharing and scale up were developed, but limited.

152. While there is considerable expertise among the partner institutions, key technical and social expertise in agrobiodiversity conservation and use was missing among the FAO project team. This affected the project's strategic technical overview, redirection and adaptive management. From diagnosis and design to implementation and monitoring, a large part of the limited results was due to the project's technical weakness and its lack of key technical expertise in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

Conclusion 7. Sustainability: overall, the prospects of sustaining the project results are mixed. On the one hand, there are very good prospects of sustaining the project results at policy and institutional levels. There are also good prospects on the financial front and when it comes to the cultural and social aspects. However, the lack of financial viability among enterprises, the lack of utility of the community seed banks and the demonstration farms, and the inevitable maintenance these require, pose significant risks to the sustainability of these infrastructures and the pilots as a whole. While there is a strong sense of ownership and commitment from the project beneficiaries, specifically the Indigenous women, the number of beneficiaries has been very low. To sustain the project results and avoid possible risks of elite capture, deliberately expanding the number of beneficiaries who can access the resources and services of the project would have helped.

Conclusion 8. Factors affecting performance: the project's performance was greatly enhanced by its partnership and stakeholder engagement, which generated reasonable co-financing and significant policy expertise and political will. The convening power of FAO facilitated the multi-institutional collaboration on policy work and institutional formation. However, there have been systemic gaps in the factors affecting performance such as weak monitoring and knowledge management.

Conclusion 9. Cross-cutting issues: the project focuses on gender, age and social inclusion by deliberately facilitating the participation and leadership of Indigenous Peoples, particularly women. The achievements in improving self-confidence and self-worth among the women are important steps towards defining a transformative agenda that could address gender and social inclusion in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. More could have been achieved if the project's agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use objective was systematically informed by women's needs and trait preferences, and by leveraging Indigenous Peoples' knowledge. Women's profiles and vulnerability assessments were not done, and this affected the specificity of the project's interventions. For example, gender is unaddressed in the training materials.

Conclusion 10. ESS: the project did not mitigate the increased ESS risk as highlighted by the MTR. Further, the project advanced to not only external PGRFA collection and storage but also characterization and process of registration, including molecular analysis plans. There was inadequacy in safeguarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples for special measures to control, develop and protect their seeds, derivatives and associated Indigenous Peoples' knowledge. The project may have impinged on the FPIC MOA with the ICC/IP for the *ex situ* collection, storage, characterization and registration of samples of indigenous and endemic varieties. This involves the associated traditional knowledge and attributing equal rights to all project work, materials and outputs. In doing so, the project may not fulfil its legal and moral obligations under international agreements such as the CBD, the ITPGRFA, the UNDRIP and the respective law of the Government of the Philippines, namely the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997. This poses a potential reputational risk to FAO, the GEF and the various departments of the Government of the Philippines.

4.2 Recommendations

153. Based on the project's findings and conclusions, the evaluation has developed a number of recommendations. First, address the project's ESS risk. Second, deliver committed essential knowledge products as tools to help sustain the project results and serve as potential public goods. Third, develop an exit strategy. Fourth, since this is a terminal evaluation, a set of recommendations is given to FAO and the GEF for future projects, and at systems levels to ensure the leveraging of institutional expertise in the context of One FAO. The timeframe for the first three sets of recommendations should take place immediately and within the project's second budget neutral extension ending in June 2022. Feasibilities and adjustments may need to be made considering the Philippine elections in May 2022 and uncertainties from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

4.2.1 Recommendations to FAO

Recommendation 1. Top priority (ESS risk): the evaluation's specific considerations for FAO are stated here. First, the project and its partners have collected and stored samples of traditional varieties from Indigenous Peoples. As a third party, the project is nearing the completion of characterization and is in the process of registering some of these varieties. Second, there are international and national policies and laws, as well as indigenous governing structures, that protect Indigenous Peoples' rights to their agrobiodiversity and Indigenous Peoples' knowledge. This involves their ABS rights, including equal rights to all project work, materials and outputs. Third, the project and its partners have not explicitly addressed such provisions under the FPIC MOA or any form of MTA for seeds. As a top priority, the evaluation recommends that FAO Philippines, as the BH, plus the PMCU, immediately undertake a consultation process with the ICC/IP of Hungduan and Hingyon, Ifugao, and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato to formulate equitable actions with the necessary provisions within three months. It is recommended that the project develop a plan with a timetable and a budget to include:

154. 1.A. Cease and disclosure measures:

i. 1.A.1. Cease all activities on the characterization and registration of the collected and stored samples, including, if any, molecular analysis.
ii. 1.A.2. Disclose a full list to relevant stakeholders, specifically the NCIP, the ICC/IP who signed the FPIC, and the LGU, of the specific rice cultivars and other crop varieties collected and stored by the project and its partners. The list should specify the name of the farmer from whom the sample was collected, which samples have already been collected by previous projects (e.g. those by the International Rice Research Institute) and which samples are unique project collections.
iii. 1.A.3. Disclose a full list of which cultivar samples are being characterized, including any molecular analysis, and by whom.
iv. 1.A.4. Disclose a full list of which cultivar samples are in the process of registration and by whom, including all documentation on the application process.
v. 1.A.5. Ensure that the stored samples in the genebank are sealed in a physical blackbox. The keys should be kept by the communities. Establish mechanisms for regular visits by the communities to check on collection viability and the status of the blackbox.
vi. 1.A.6. Disclose a full list and provide a summary in the indigenous language of all project materials and outputs that are published or communicated in any medium.

155. 1.B. Assess and redress measures:

i. 1.B.1. Conduct participatory stakeholder consultations centred on Indigenous Peoples and the LGUs to identify the gaps and lessons learned. Agree upon objectives, steps, participation, governance, principles of engagement, outputs and criteria to measure the achievements of the objectives.
ii. 1.B.2. Agree upon and document equitable provisions for the MTA/blackbox agreement, the ABS, and the protection of indigenous knowledge. This needs to align with the UNDRIP, the CBD, the ITPGRFA and the 1997 Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act. It should include provisions for plant materials and data regarding the collection, storage, characterization and registration that protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples.
iii. 1.B.3. Agree on how to acknowledge the equal rights of the IPP/IC on all project materials and outputs.
iv. 1.B.4. Ensure that any agreements are addressed to and respect the collective rights of the Indigenous communities.
v. 1.B.5. Design a communications plan to document and relay the results to the wider Indigenous communities of Ifugao and Lake Sebu.

156. 1.C. Coordination and support measures:

i. 1.C.1. At FAO, strengthen coordination and engagement with the ITPGRFA Secretariat to ensure organizational support in addressing these risks.
ii. 1.C.2. With the Government of the Philippines, strengthen coordination and engagement with the ITPGRFA national focal point to ensure a shared understanding of the issues and a commitment to their resolution.
iii. 1.C.3. Appoint a global honest broker to oversee the whole procedure, preferably with the ITPGRFA Secretariat and before the project's closure.
iv. 1.C.4. At local levels and with approval of Indigenous Peoples, appoint an honest broker to support the Indigenous communities from Ifugao and Lake Sebu, preferably before the project's closure.
v. 1.C.5. Provide basic training and support to enable the ICC/IP to engage in this process.
vi. 1.C.6. Document the entire process and draft lessons for a significant good practice contribution.

Recommendation 2. Quality delivery of knowledge products: a substantial budget has been allocated to knowledge products. These could be used as tools to help sustain the project results. As potential public goods, the evaluation recommends that committed knowledge products, particularly training materials and policy briefs, be delivered as finished products to the project stakeholders. Specifically, the knowledge products should go to the Indigenous communities and the LGUs by the end of the project's closure.

157. 2.1. The training materials should include an adult learning participatory approach that solicits and integrates indigenous knowledge with an appropriate focus on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and gender and social inclusion. The materials should conform to the FAO FFS guidelines.

158. 2.2. The production of knowledge products should include a peer review system for both the technical and communications aspects.

159. 2.3. Encourage the Government of the Philippines to document lessons learned on the project's innovative institutional formation with the various governmental departments of agriculture, environment, Indigenous Peoples, culture and education, and tourism. This could be formulated as an official submission to the next governing body of the ITPGRFA regarding the implementation of articles on conservation, the sustainable use of plant genetic resources and farmers' rights.

160. 2.4. More importantly, ensure that the ICC/IP have joint rights to all project materials and outputs, whether or not these are published or communicated in any medium (see the ESS recommendations.)

Recommendation 3. Exit strategy, policy work: in order to ensure that the policy and institutional formation achievements are sustained throughout the various policy approval processes, the evaluation recommends that FAO Philippines and the PMCU develop, by the end of the project, an exit strategy as follows.

161. 3.1. The PMCU and the Department of Agriculture's Office of the Under Secretary of Operations should map policy processes for the approval and implementation of the Seed Act. This includes the NIAHS and the LIAHS, and an agreement on a course of action.

162. 3.2. The PMCU and the Department of Agriculture's Office of the Under Secretary of Operations should make provisions to ensure that the project's policy progress is reported to the Government of the Philippines and reflected in their compliance with their CBD plan.

163. 3.3. The PMCU and the Department of Agriculture's Office of the Under Secretary of Operations should liaise with and support the Philippine national focal point in reporting the project's achievements as part of the government's compliance with the ITPGRFA.

Recommendation 4. Exit strategy, pilot activities: here, the evaluation considers the functionality and sustainability challenges of the community seed banks, demonstration farms, farm equipment and agrobiodiversity enterprises. It also recognizes that the project has already officially transferred the community seed banks to the LGUs. The evaluation therefore recommends, before project closure, an exit strategy as follows.

164. The PMCU should communicate clearly to the NCIP, the ICC/IP and the LGUs that the project will definitely end in June 2022. Further, discuss and document lessons learned, including sharing the evaluation results with the communities.

165. The PMCU should have a consultative dialogue with the 17 pilot communities and the respective NCIP, ICC/IP and LGUs on the viability, functionality and maintenance of the community seed banks, demonstration farms, farm equipment and agrobiodiversity enterprises. This is to assess what should be maintained and to identify what changes need to be done. Discuss the rationale and feasibility of the operations and maintenance of all 15 remaining community seed banks. This includes how the community seed banks can link with one another and if it is more realistic to reduce them in number. For the two community seed banks that have been emptied, discuss the needs and prospects of the infrastructure to continue as a seed bank or agree on repurposing, as appropriate. For the remaining community seed banks, explore how these can be part of the local climate adaptation plans. This can be done by seeking technical assistance on utilizing agrobiodiversity as part of the community-based disaster risk reduction.

166. For the livelihoods enterprise, facilitate linkages with the existing social enterprises or related LGU projects to gather continued support for the involved community members.

4.2.2 Recommendations to FAO and the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit

Recommendation 5. The systems weakness was a major factor that negatively affected the project's performance. For GEF projects on agrobiodiversity, the evaluation recommends that FAO conduct a systems review focused on ensuring the delivery of a coherent project design, technical competence, project supervision, compliance with quality standards, a responsive MEL, and outcome delivery. Besides future project improvements, this would further advance FAO's added value in technical and institutional innovation for agrobiodiversity management. It would also align with FAO's Strategic Framework and be responsive to GEF's policy and objectives.

167. 5.1. FAO should also ensure that it is fit for purpose to execute technically complex agrobiodiversity projects. This would involve FAO establishing high calibre technical and social agrobiodiversity expertise at the implementation level. It could then connect to field-level technical data to guide project implementation and provide a strategic overview towards the achievement of project outcomes.

168. 5.2. FAO and the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit should ensure that every agrobiodiversity project can comply with complex technical and legal requirements. For instance, the ITPGRFA Secretariat carries out capacity building and training for FAO Members and national partners on a regular basis and aligns with the CBD's Nagoya Protocol. Key FAO personnel at regional and national offices who execute GEF projects should attend such trainings. FAO also has policy guidelines on Indigenous Peoples in accordance with UNDRIP that can support project staff. Likewise, FAO's Indigenous Peoples Unit can be involved to support project design and implementation.

i. 5.2.1. FAO's oversight and supervision are to be driven by evidence, a results framework and a systems perspective in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use.
ii. 5.2.2. FAO's management responsibilities and roles, decision-making and accountability need to be clearly understood and implemented with due attention paid to staff turnover.
iii. 5.2.3. Quality standards must be adhered to and monitored in the delivery of project outputs and the project's value for money.
iv. 5.2.4. GEF's global environmental benefit should be linked to the project's knowledge management. The knowledge products require planning and a peer review system in the form of PGRFA, models, tools and concepts. Good practice and lessons need to be part of this.
v. 5.2.5. Large-scale projects should have well-defined and periodically reviewed knowledge management and communication strategies.
vi. 5.2.6. The project's planned interventions such as the community seed banks, demonstration farms and livelihood enterprises are to be based on sound technical, social and financial feasibilities.
vii. 5.2.7. Encourage a culture change of failing forwards. Mistakes and risks are part of the dynamism of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Mistakes and risks should be openly discussed and addressed at all levels by the PMCU, the BH, the LTO and the FLO. Mistakes and risks are opportunities for learning and developing good practices.

viii. 5.2.8. Encourage a culture change where compliance is seen as an important means to an end of results-driven management.

ix. 5.2.9. Avoid the assessment of projects where the involvement of Indigenous Peoples is rated as a risk. Working with these communities is not a risk but an opportunity and a privilege. Therefore, working with the IPP/IC should be categorized as a factor that needs extra diligence throughout the project cycle.

x. 5.2.10. Under One FAO, ensure that FAO consistently strengthens and leverages its technical expertise. It should enable the engagement of programmes, departments and communities like ITPGRFA, FFS and Indigenous Peoples with FAO headquarters and FAO Regional and Country Offices. The different units and offices should systematically discuss coordination, leveraging and peer reviews. They should also address gaps and advance technical and social innovations on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

5. Lessons learned

5.1 Case 1 context

169. Many, if not most, of the world's Indigenous communities are increasingly engaged in market economies. This is certainly the case for Ifugao and Lake Sebu. Ifugao province, for instance, is a major player in the hybrid vegetable and corn production and marketing for the Philippines. Project interventions on the conservation and sustainable use of traditional agrobiodiversity therefore need to deal with the duality of traditional and modern production systems.

5.1.1 Good practices

170. To adapt to rapidly changing environmental contexts and market demand, Indigenous communities combine the use of traditional and modern varieties for their dual farming systems. For example, they tend to annually plant a diversity of traditional rice varieties largely for home consumption, whereas they biannually plant modern crops and varieties largely for the market.

5.1.2 Lessons learned

171. In cases of severe drought, farmers reluctantly abandon their traditional rice production. For project interventions, baseline information is important to understand farmer profiles and vulnerabilities, and their context-specific decision-making rationale as to why they abandon and keep specific crops and crop varieties.

172. Agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use need to be informed by the duality of the production systems of local farmers and Indigenous communities. These populations use a diversity of agrobiodiversity, often both traditional and modern varieties, to adapt to vast and rapidly changing environments and markets.

173. With climate change, traditional cultivars and landraces are facing increasing biotic and abiotic stresses. Their conservation and sustainable use should not be confined to the storage and maintenance of varietal traits. Rather, crop improvements through enhancement and breeding should be considered.

5.2 Case 2 context

174. Seeds are a vital part of the farmers' natural and social capital for their livelihoods, food and nutrition security. Project interventions on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use need to build from and complement the diversity of people's seed security strategies.

5.2.1 Good practices

175. Like many farmers and Indigenous communities around the world, the people of Ifugao and Lake Sebu employ various seed security strategies for their traditional rice varieties: (i) they apply local knowledge in seed selection from standing crops on-farms; (ii) they apply Indigenous Peoples' techniques for seed storage at household levels; and (iii) as the need or interest arises, they also source from, exchange with or gift seeds to other famers.

They also share corresponding knowledge on seed traits, seed management and agronomic practices among families, relatives and friends, and across generations.

176. Seed fairs can provide good venues for wider groups of farmers to exchange seeds and knowledge. Seed fairs can also serve as vehicles for raising public awareness of agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

5.2.2 Lessons learned

177. Project interventions on the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity such as community seed banks and seed fairs should be designed to complement, not replace, existing farmers' seed strategies and use of local knowledge. Community seed banks and other interventions could add value to farmers' seed strategies by increasing and complementing the diversity of reliable seed sources and corresponding knowledge.

178. Seeds are an experience good. Farmers definitively know the performance of the seeds once planted and grown. Bad performing seeds can be devastating for the farmers' livelihoods. Therefore, mutual trust in the quality of the seed material, reliability of knowledge and social relations are important components of their livelihoods. In the case of the community seed banks, farmers are more likely to consistently deposit, share or borrow seeds if they are assured of the quality, quantity and timeliness of the seeds. These three factors can be assured by including: (i) demand-led objectives; (ii) community governance; (iii) adequate technical support and linkages; and (iv) continuous technical practices such as farmer-led seed characterization, seed management and good record keeping.

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Appendix 1. People interviewed

Last name	First name	Designation/representation	Organization/location
Agcopra	Virginia	National Project Coordinator	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila
Agonia	Jack	Administration and Finance	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila
Ampil	Amparo	Chief of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries Policy Division	Department of Agriculture, Quezon City, Philippines
Aquino	Glenn	Administration and Finance	FAO Philippines, Manila
Arino	Kenelynn	Special Project Staff Designate	Provincial Planning and Development Office, South Cotabato, Philippines
Artacho	Zaldy	Municipal Agriculture Officer	Municipal Agriculture Office, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Balicuscos	Daniel	Ubo Indigenous Peoples, Datu/Leader, Organization Leader	Kun K'wit Atul Ubo (KUNKAU) Inc., Lamfugon, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Banday	Rolly	T'boli Indigenous Peoples, Farmer	Luhib, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Banday	Florabel	Indigenous Peoples, Youth Representative of Ubo and T'boli Indigenous Peoples	Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Baron	Ares Erwin	M&E Specialist	Foreign Assisted Special Projects, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Quezon City, Philippines
Becker	Aaron	GEF Regional Focal Point	FAO RAP, Bangkok
Bidang	Elisa	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member	Baang Women's Organization and Rural Improvement Club (RIC), Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Binwek	Gloria	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member	Cababuyan South Farmers Organization, Hingyon, Ifugao, Philippines
Borromeo	Teresita	Professor	University of the Philippines Los Banos, Laguna, Philippines
Braun	Genevieve	Programme Officer	FAO-GEF Unit, Rome
Buenaventura	Catherine	Supervising Agriculturist	Provincial Agriculture Environment and Natural Resources Office, Ifugao, Philippines
Cabansal	Jenny	Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member	Lake Sebu Indigenous Women and Farmers Association, Klubi, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Caguiat	Xavier	Senior Science Research Specialist	PhilRice, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, Philippines
Calingayan	Conchita	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Dackitan Farmers Organization/Community Seed Bank Custodian, Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Cayong	Alfonso	Agriculturist, Officer in Charge	Municipal Agriculture Office, Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Cente	Christina	T'boli Indigenous Peoples, Farmer	Klubi, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Cunanan	Maylen	Agriculturist II, Project Liaison	Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, Quezon City, Philippines

Last name	First name	Designation/representation	Organization/location
Dacula	Arnold	Enterprise Development Specialist, Lake Sebu	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila
Dagumay	Brigida	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Hingyon, Ifugao, Philippines
Dela Cruz	Mary Jane	Technical Officer	ITPGRFA Secretariat, FAO, Rome
Dharmapuri	Sridhar	LTO, Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer and Module Leader	Food System, Nutrition and Healthy Diets Module, FAO RAP, Bangkok
Dumale	Candelaria	Ilonggo Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member, Farmer	Lake Sebu Indigenous Women and Farmers Association, Luhib, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Eballar	Conchita	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member	Cababuyan South Farmers Organization, Hingyon, Ifugao, Philippines
Estrada Avila	Mariana	Indigenous Women and Programme Support	Indigenous Peoples Unit, FAO, Rome
Evangelio	Edcelle	Procurement Officer	FAO Philippines, Manila
Fernandez Larrinoa	Yon	Head	Indigenous Peoples Unit, FAO, Rome
Ferrand	Pierre	Agricultural Officer (Agroecology)	Plant Production and Protection Division, FAO RAP, Bangkok
Gadit	Richard	Provincial Coordinator, Ifugao	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila
Go	Merlinda	Ilonggo Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member	Lake Sebu Indigenous Women and Farmers Association, Luhib, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato Philippines
Griffin	Jeffrey	Senior Coordinator	FAO-GEF Unit, FAO, Rome
Gulgulway	Anita	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member	AMK Organization, Hingyon, Ifugao, Philippines
Ibat	Pacita	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Bokiawan Women's Organization, Bokiawan, Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Ignacio	Normita	Executive Director	Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment (SEARICE), Quezon City, Philippines
Inohabian	Myla	Staff	Hungduan Employees Multipurpose Cooperative, Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Joehl Cadena	Angela	GEF Programming Specialist	FAO RAP, Bangkok
Kalaw-Luglug	Giselle	Team Member FPIC Facilitation	NCIP, Ifugao, Philippines
Kharki	Sameer	FLO	FAO RAP, Bangkok
Kiene	Tobias	Technical Officer	ITPGRFA Secretariat, FAO, Rome
Ladisla	Juvy	Chief, Partnership and Engagement	Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau Caves, Wetlands and Other Ecosystems Division (CAWED), Quezon City, Philippines
Lagana	Remmy	T'boli Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Lamcade Farmers Association, Lamcade, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Lales	Joell	Officer in Charge, Assistant Bureau Director	Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, Quezon City, Philippines

Last name	First name	Designation/representation	Organization/location
LImmangya	Teresa	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Nungulunan Rural Improvement Club (RIC) and Farmers Organization, Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Lunag	Jacqueline	Chief and Supervisor, School Governance	Department of Education, Division Office, Ifugao, Philippines
Magtibay	Jasmine	Backstopping Officer, Normative Group Leader	FAO Philippines, Manila
Makilan	Marlon	Programme and Training Specialist	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila
Malingay	Nonito	Ubo Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Elomet Indigenous Peoples' Farmers Association, Luhib, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Nagulman	Editha	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Poblacion Farmers Association, Hingyon, Ifugao, Philippines
Navarette	Justina	Former Provincial Agriculture Officer	Provincial Agriculture Office, South Cotabato, Philippines
Ngatiyon	Araceli	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Anao Timpuyog Organization, Hingyon, Ifugao, Philippines
Nunal	Ivy	Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member	Lake Sebu Indigenous Women and Farmers Association, Klubi, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Ogayan	Haydee	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Bitu SEA-K Organization (Self-Employment Sa Kaunlaran), HIngyon, Ifugao, Philippines
Palatic	Helen	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Hungduan Heirloom Rice Producer Organization, Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Palis Duran	Tamara	Assistant FAOR for Programme	FAO Philippines, Manila
Panaga	Ian Jomari	Development Management Officer	Policy Research Service, Department of Agriculture, Quezon City Philippines
Peria	Elpidio	ABS, Agrobiodiversity Legal Expert	Consultant, General Santos City, South Cotabato, Philippines
Pinyuhan	Marjun	Community Facilitator, Hungduan, Ifugao	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila
Ramilo	Kathleen	Senior Enterprise Development Specialist	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila, Philippines
Rodriguez	Fidel	Project Backstopping Officer	FAO Philippines, Manila
Samillano	Jun Rey	Agriculturist	Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute, Region XII, South Cotabato, Philippines
Santos-Doctor	Joy Angelica	Indigenous Peoples' Rights, Agrobiodiversity Legal Expert	Consultant, Tagbilaran City, Bohol, Philippines
Sison	Melanie	Communication Specialist	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila
Sugan	Imelda	Ubo Indigenous Peoples, Organization Member	Lake Sebu Indigenous Women and Farmers Association, Lamfugon, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines

Last name	First name	Designation/representation	Organization/location
Sulan	Chita	T'boli Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Lake Sebu Indigenous Women and Farmers Association, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Tadulan	Edwin	Ubo Indigenous Peoples, Farmer	Lamfugon, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Tamonggal	Nimfa	T'boli Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Lake Sebu Indigenous Women and Farmers Association, Lamcade, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Tanninen	Katti	FAOR	FAO Philippines, Manila
Toledo	Alvaro	Interim Deputy Secretary	ITPGRFA Secretariat, FAO, Rome
Tomas	Deo	Community Facilitator, Hingyon, Ifugao	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Manila
Tuan	Nadia Rose	T'boli Indigenous Peoples, Farmer	Klubi, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Tupaz	Jennifer	Municipal Tourism Officer	Municipal Tourism Office, Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Philippines
Ulo	Lebert	Agriculturist	Provincial Agriculture Office, South Cotabato, Philippines
Ulo	Reden	Dean	Santa Cruz Mission School, Inc., Lake Sebu, South Cotabato Philippines
Umbrero	Rafael	M&E Specialist	FAO Philippines, Manila
Varty	Nigel	Mid-term Evaluation Team Leader	Consultant
Wacoy	Jonathan	Municipal Agriculture Officer	Municipal Agriculture Office, Hungduan, Ifugao, Philippines
Yogyog	Agapita	Tuwali Indigenous Peoples, Organization Leader	Poblacion Farmers Assiocation, Hingyon, Ifugao, Philippines
Zhou	Bo	LTO/Agriculture Officer	Plant Production and Protection Division, FAO RAP, Bangkok

Appendix 2. GEF evaluation criteria rating table

The table below should be completed by the evaluation team as part of the terminal evaluation process. See Appendix 3 for guidance on the rating schemes under each area of analysis.

GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating[i]	Summary comments[ii]
A. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	HS–HU	
A1.1 Alignment with the GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS–HU	
A1.2 Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS–HU	
A1.3 Complementarity with existing interventions	HS–HU	
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	HS–HU	
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	HS–HU	
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes[iii] and project objectives	HS–HU	
- Outcome 1	HS–HU	
- Outcome 2	HS–HU	
- Outcome 3	HS–HU	
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives and outcomes	HS–HU	
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	HS–HU	
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency[iv]	HS–HU	
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	L–HU	
D1.1 Financial risks	L–HU	
D1.2 Sociopolitical risks	L–HU	
D1.3 Institutional and governance risks	L–HU	
D1.4 Environmental risks	L–HU	
D2. Catalysis and replication	HS–HU	
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness[v]	HS–HU	
E2. Quality of project implementation	HS–HU	
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (BH, LTO, PTF, etc.)	HS–HU	
E2.1 Project oversight (PSC, project working group, etc.)	HS–HU	
E3. Quality of project execution For directly executed project modality: PMCU/BH For Operational Partners Implementation Modality projects: executing agency	HS–HU	
E4. Financial management and co-financing	HS–HU	
E5. Project partnerships and stakeholder engagement	HS–HU	
E6. Communication, knowledge management and knowledge products	HS–HU	
E7. Overall quality of M&E	HS–HU	
E7.1 M&E design	HS–HU	

GEF criteria/subcriteria	Rating[i]	Summary comments[ii]
E7.2 M&E plan implementation (including financial and human resources)	HS–HU	
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	HS–HU	
F. CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	HS–HU	
F2. Human rights issues and Indigenous Peoples	HS–HU	
F2. ESS	HS–HU	
Overall project rating	**HS–HU**	

Notes: [i] See rating scheme at the end of this document.

[ii] This includes reference to the relevant sections in the report.

[iii] Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

[iv] This includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

[v] This refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners at project launch.

Appendix 3. Rating scheme[19]

Project results and outcomes

Project outcomes are rated based on the extent to which project objectives were achieved. A six-point rating scale is used to assess overall outcomes:

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	*"Level of outcomes achieved clearly exceeds expectations and/or there were no shortcomings."*
Satisfactory (S)	*"Level of outcomes achieved was as expected and/or there were no or minor shortcomings."*
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	*"Level of outcomes achieved more or less as expected and/or there were moderate shortcomings."*
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	*"Level of outcomes achieved somewhat lower than expected and/or there were significant shortcomings."*
Unsatisfactory (U)	*"Level of outcomes achieved substantially lower than expected and/or there were major shortcomings."*
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	*"Only a negligible level of outcomes achieved and/or there were severe shortcomings."*
Unable to Assess (UA)	*The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.*

The results framework of some projects may have been modified. When this affects project impact, the outcomes and outputs were not scaled down and the evaluator assessed achievements based on the revised results framework. In instances where the scope of the project outcomes and outputs was scaled down, the magnitude of and necessity for downscaling were taken into account. Despite the achievement of results per the revised framework, a lower outcome effectiveness rating may have been given.

Project implementation and execution

Quality of implementation and execution are rated separately. Quality of implementation pertains to the roles and responsibilities discharged by the GEF agencies that have direct access to the GEF resources. Quality of execution pertains to the roles and responsibilities discharged by the country or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from the GEF agencies, and executed the funded activities on the ground. The performance is rated on a six-point scale:

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	*There were no shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution exceeded expectations.*
Satisfactory (S)	*There were no or minor shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution meets expectations.*
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	*There were some shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution more or less meets expectations.*
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	*There were significant shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution somewhat lower than expected.*

[19] See instructions provided in Annex 2: Rating Scales in the "Guidelines for GEF Agencies in Conducting Terminal Evaluations for Full-sized Project", April 2017.

Rating	Description
Unsatisfactory (U)	*There were major shortcomings and quality of implementation or execution substantially lower than expected.*
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	*There were severe shortcomings in quality of implementation or execution.*
Unable to Assess (UA)	*The available information does not allow an assessment of the quality of implementation or execution.*

Monitoring and evaluation

Quality of project M&E is assessed in terms of:

i. design; and
ii. implementation.

Sustainability

Sustainability is assessed by taking financial, sociopolitical, institutional and environmental risks into account. The evaluator may consider other risks that affect sustainability. Overall sustainability is assessed using a four-point scale:

Rating	Description
Likely (L)	*There is little or no risk to sustainability.*
Moderately Likely (ML)	*There are moderate risks to sustainability.*
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	*There are significant risks to sustainability.*
Unlikely (U)	*There are severe risks to sustainability.*
Unable to Assess (UA)	*Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability.*

Appendix 4. GEF Co-financing table

Sources of co-financing	Name of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount confirmed upon GEF CEO endorsement/approval USD	Actual amount materialized by 30 June 2020 USD	Actual amount materialized by 30 November 2021 (@ PHP 48 per USD)	Actual amount materialized at mid-term (confirmed by the evaluation team) USD	Expected total disbursement by the end of the project USD	Project component contribution
National government	Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research	In-kind	2 172 214	1 063 098.00	1 407 789	1 055 879	764 425	Components 1, 2 and 3
	Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute	In-kind	90 910	17 364.00	69 277.75	11 364	21 632.25	Component 2
	Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Soil and Water Management	In-kind	88 335	200.00	200.00	For verification	88 135.00 For confirmation	Component 2
	Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry	In-kind	113 636	41 600.00	41 600.00	40 000	32 036 For confirmation (Already allocated PHP 5 000 000 for CY 2021 for community seed bank mainstreaming and agrobiodiversity sustainability)	Component 2
	PhilRice	In-kind	1 136 364	1 500.00	7 764.87	For verification	5 000.00 For confirmation	Component 2

Sources of co-financing	Name of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount confirmed upon GEF CEO endorsement/approval USD	Actual amount materialized by 30 June 2020 USD	Actual amount materialized by 30 November 2021 (@ PHP 48 per USD)	Actual amount materialized at mid-term (confirmed by the evaluation team) USD	Expected total disbursement by the end of the project USD	Project component contribution
	Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau	In-kind	27 838	23 278.18	23 590.68	1 495	4 247.32 For updating	Component 1
	Department of Environment and Natural Resources Cordillera Administrative Region	In-kind	3 794 369	3 593 742.00	3 593 742.00	3 593 742 For validation	For confirmation	Component 2
	Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region 12	In-kind	16 205	13 364.00	13 857.00	13 364	2 841 For confirmation	Component 2
	NCIP	In-kind	2 272	640.00	2 311.58	2 272 For verification	0 Already exceeded the commitment	Component 1
Local government	South Cotabato provincial government	In-kind	1 014 270	51 614.00	101 242	49 214	40 000.00 For confirmation	Component 2
	Lake Sebu municipality	In-kind	94 887	13 116.00	57 518	9 788	37 369 For confirmation	Component 2
	Hingyon municipality	In-kind	1 118 862	15 587.00	23 539	4 817	2 000.00 For confirmation	Component 2
	Ifugao provincial government	In-kind	815 682	26 334	33 301	23 934	40 000.00 For confirmation	Component 2

Sources of co-financing	Name of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount confirmed upon GEF CEO endorsement/approval USD	Actual amount materialized by 30 June 2020 USD	Actual amount materialized by 30 November 2021 (@ PHP 48 per USD)	Actual amount materialized at mid-term (confirmed by the evaluation team) USD	Expected total disbursement by the end of the project USD	Project component contribution
	Hungduan municipality	In-kind	475 680	16 397	24 351	13 177	4 000.00 For confirmation	Component 2
International organization	World Agricultural Heritage Foundation (WAHF)		100 000	100 000	100 000	100 000	0 (Already used 100% of the commitment)	Component 2
	FAO		457 800	To be verified	To be verified	To be verified	To be verified	Components 1, 2 and 3
TOTAL			**11 519 324**	**4 977 834.18 (43.21%)**	**5 500 083.8 8 (47.74%)**			

Source: PMCU email to evaluation dated 16 December 2021.

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
Project Objective/ Impact To enhance, expand and sustain the dynamic conservation practices that sustain globally significant agro-biodiversity in traditional agroecosystems of the Philippines.	Number of traditional varieties grown in target barangays (as a measure of their conservation status)	Traditional agrobiodiversity varieties in target municipalities: i. Hungduan: 24 rice, 1 sweet potato, 3 taro, 1 yam ii. Hingyon: 17 rice, 5 taro, 5 sweet potato, 0 yam iii. Lake Sebu: 20 rice, 9 taro, 1 sweet potato, 5 yam	Numbers per barangay maintained at baseline levels over 300 ha of traditional agroecosystems in 17 target barangays.	MU	There has been no baseline for comparison. There was no analysis of importance of these additional varieties, their performance within the dynamic farmers' seed systems, etc. The community seed banks, the cornerstone of the conservation approach to achieve and maintain the numerical targets were under-utilized and have not been fully functional. Other interventions were not nuanced to support and protect the Indigenous Peoples. The interventions were similar across municipalities regardless of Indigenous group, which gives a semblance of being top-down. As such, evaluation is not confident that there was indeed expansion and sustainability of agrobiodiversity within the context of traditional agroecosystems in the Philippines.
	Number of additional traditional varieties grown in target barangays	N/A	An average of 5 additional traditional varieties grown in each of the 17 target barangays.		

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
Outcome 1.1. Strengthened policy and legal framework defining a national approach to agrobiodiversity and guiding the design and implementation of corresponding activities at national and local levels	Number of target policy instruments (see Output 1.1.1) embedded in programmes with corresponding budget assignment	Target policies exist but are not implemented due to lack of corresponding instruments.	Four target policy instruments (see Output 1.1.1) are embedded in programmes with corresponding budget assignment.	S	The project developed and steered processes for cross-cutting and intersectional policies. This is a considerable achievement, given that at national level, there is no overarching policy framework to align the project. Local resolutions directly supporting the project including mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity in the local executive and legislative agenda of South Cotabato were developed. Policies though still need further articulation of Indigenous Peoples' rights both in process (Indigenous Peoples as co-creators of policies related to them) and articulation in policy content.
Output 1.1.1. Key policy instruments favouring agrobiodiversity conservation developed at national and local levels	Number of policy instruments developed favouring agrobiodiversity conservation	At least five policy provisions that potentially promote agrobiodiversity conservation exist but lack instruments to permit their implementation.	Policy instruments (e.g. administrative orders, joint memorandum circulars) developed for: i. one key agriculture sector policy ii. one key environment sector policy iii. one key culture-related policy iv. one key Indigenous Peoples-related policy		
	Number and nature of recommendations generated to guide policy development		Recommendations generated through studies to guide policy development for: i. Customized crop loans and insurance for agrobiodiversity production ii. Facilitating organic agriculture certification in remote upland areas iii. Incorporating agrobiodiversity and biodiversity friendly agriculture into protocols for agricultural land use as envisioned by the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans		

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
			iv. Integrating the role of agrobiodiversity and enhancing benefits from ecoagri-based tourism development at the local levels		
Output 1.1.2. Specific guidelines supporting the piloting of approaches to agrobiodiversity management and conservation in the target areas	Coverage of special orders and MOAs to guide the piloting of approaches to agrobiodiversity management in the target areas	No instruments have been formulated yet.	Special orders (SOs) and memoranda of agreement (MOA) exist to guide the piloting of approaches to agrobiodiversity management and conservation in the target areas.		
Outcome 1.2. Enhanced institutional coordination and capacity to effectively address cross-sectoral issues of agro-biodiversity.	Number and type of instruments into which inter-disciplinary agrobiodiversity considerations are incorporated	Recognition of the value of agrobiodiversity is limited only to certain special research programs of government; Department of Agriculture recognizes importance of agrobiodiversity and is proposing to consolidate programmes on the issue.	Interdisciplinary integration and coordination regarding agrobiodiversity reflected in: i. Plans of local multisectoral councils of three Municipal Local Government Units (MLGUs) and two Municipal Local Government Units (PLGUs) ii. At least one protected area plan per target region (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) iii. At least one Ancestral Domain Area Development Plan (NCIP) iv. Specific support programme of Department of Agriculture to Indigenous Peoples (IP)	S	The project's institutional formation – the project coordinating committees (PCC) from national, provincial to local level – were catalytic in the successful achievement of its policy objectives. The project contributed in strengthening institutional relationships between and amongst agencies to address agrobiodiversity concerns.
Output 1.2.1. Strengthened capacities and	Number of existing inter-institutional coordination	Ecosystems management including general biodiversity conservation is considered in inter-institutional coordination mechanisms (e.g. Provincial Development Councils, Regional	Inter-institutional coordination regarding agrobiodiversity included in		

<table>
<tr><th>Results chain</th><th>Indicators</th><th>Baseline</th><th>End of project target</th><th>Achievements and ratings</th><th>Justification for rating</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">mechanisms for addressing interdisciplinary aspects of agrobiodiversity conservation</td><td>mechanisms in the agendas of which agrobiodiversity issues and good management practices and needs are taken up</td><td>Development Councils, regional NCI) but agrobiodiversity is not yet included in the discourse.</td><td>agendas of existing coordination mechanisms:
i. 5 Local Development Councils/Municipal Agriculture and Fisheries Councils (3 MLGU and 2 PLGU)
ii. 3 Municipal Development Councils (MDCs)
iii. 2 Provincial Development Councils (PDCs)
iv. 2 Regional Development Councils (RDCs)
v. National Convergence Initiative (NCI)
Bilateral agreements between Department of Agriculture/ Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Department of Agriculture/NCIP incorporate agrobiodiversity concerns</td><td rowspan="2"></td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Number of staff trained in inter-disciplinary issues related to on-farm agrobiodveristy conservation and related ecosystem management</td><td>Forestry/conservation professionals are principally focused on biodiversity conservation in protected areas.

Agricultural professionals are principally focused on ex situ conservation of agrobiodiversity rather than on-farm approaches.</td><td>Number of staff:<table><tr><th>Institution</th><th>National</th><th>Target regions</th></tr><tr><td>Department of Environment and Natural Resources</td><td>5</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>Department of Agriculture</td><td>5</td><td>16</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
			P/MLGUs 0 21 Others 9 29 19 82		
Outcome 2.1. Conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity is supported by planning and governance mechanisms	Number of types of plans and programmes into which agrobiodiversity concerns are embedded	Planning frameworks are currently inadequate for supporting agrobiodiversity conservation.	Agrobiodiversity concerns embedded in Comprehensive Development Plans (CDPs), Executive Legislative Agendas (ELAs) and thematic programmes for agricultural and natural resource management and tourism in 3 MLGUs and 2 PLGUs.	MS	Municipal resolutions supporting the project have been issued, followed by the issuance of Executive Orders creating the Municipal Coordinating Councils and Technical Working Groups for the eventual establishment of LIAHS. The project organized and/or revived more than ten peoples' organizations, farmers associations and women's groups within and across communities. However, the weak technical intervention (e.g. prominence of seed bank as a structure rather than as needed element of Indigenous Peoples' seed system for their conservation work; traditional rice varieties (TRV) registration of local government rather than the Indigenous Peoples'
	Number of MLGUs and communities in which formalized provisions for enforcement are in place	Governance frameworks are currently inadequate for supporting agrobiodiversity conservation.	Formalized provisions for enforcement in place in 3 MLGUs and 9 communities (as models for the 17 target barangays), specifically addressing threats affecting agrobiodiversity.		
Output 2.1.1. Local Government Unit (LGU) plans and programmes in pilot municipalities providing for agrobiodiversity conservation	Number of target MLGUs in which agriculture development plans, ordinances and programmes are included	Current LGU strategic plans in Ifugao are concerned with the rice terraces (location of agrobiodiversity) but silent on agrobiodiversity conservation itself. Ifugao Agriculture staff are very familiar with traditional varieties and practices. LGU strategic plans for all sites plan to convert gradually to organic agriculture.	Agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use are included in agriculture development plans, ordinances and programmes in all three target MLGUs. i. Agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use are reflected in the updating process for land use and socioeconomic plans in all three MLGUs ii. Provincial level principles and safeguards developed to guide and harmonize agency interventions in the high agrobiodiversity target		

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
			areas (including for research and development in Ifugao)		themselves) is not the best model to be formalized and enforced.
Output 2.1.2. Community level planning and governance frameworks in pilot communities incorporating agrobiodiversity considerations	Number of target barangays in which plans and customary norms are in place incorporating consideration of agrobiodiversity	Community traditional norms in pilot municipalities encourage maintenance of small plots of traditional varieties; in Ifugao women's roles include maintenance of seed selection practices. Leaders are aware of threats to agrobiodiversity, but no proactive plans exist for their long-term conservation.	Plans and customary norms cover all 17 target barangays: i. Providing for or enhancing the incorporation of agrobiodiversity considerations into agricultural and forest management and tourism ii. Regulating the commercialization of agrobiodiversity by individuals in IP communities		
Outcome 2.2. Traditional varieties are maintained in community gene banks	Number of agrobiodiversity varieties/farmer selections maintained in gene banks, supported by *ex situ* collections	Some individual initiatives (e.g. private museum in Lake Sebu municipality) hold a very limited number of varieties without adequate storage conditions. One seed bank exists in Hingyon. Some varieties are included in *ex situ* collections in universities.	All traditional agrobiodiversity varieties/farmer selections present in the three target municipalities are maintained in gene banks, and supported by *ex situ* collections.	U	Whilst the Mid Term Review assessed the establishment of the 17 Community Seed Banks (CSBs) in 2018 as a major achievement of the project, the evaluation finds that for the actual implementation the community seed banks had not been fully functional and are seriously under-utilised. With regard to the traditional varieties being maintained in community seed/genebanks, the rationale for the prescription, design, and actual utilization of the seed/community genebanks have indicated limited results. Key diagnostic activities, which should inform the rationale
Output 2.2.1. Community-based gene management systems and networks supported by *ex situ* collections	Number of pilot municipalities in which community gene banks and seed stores have been established	There are community seedbanks in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) established as emergency seed supply in times of disaster but these are only for a few varieties (both High Yeld Varieties and TRV).	One community gene bank and one seed store established in each pilot municipality, supported by agreements, rules and procedures for their management and backed up by e*x situ* collections.		

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
					and design of the CSBs, were not prioritised and are only being done towards the end of the project implementation. Without a proper diagnosis, it is not possible to define the solid rationale, objectives and operations of the seedbank. The project's rationale in relation to the purpose of conservation and use of traditional varieties remains unclear. In terms of implementation, the low membership, low stock and usage of seeds, low number of rice varieties and the farmers' concern for the reliability and quality of seeds in the community seed bank puts into question the viability of the 17 Community Seed Banks.
Outcome 2.3. Enhanced and expanded knowledge among local level decision makers and community members on the application of dynamic agrobiodiversity conservation practices	Number of LGU policy makers, planners and extension personnel in the core LGUs aware of the value of agrobiodiversity and specific management options to ensure	LGU members, especially agricultural extension and Natural Resource Management staff, are typically aware of general environmental issues but not of the full importance of, or management options for, biodiversity (including agrobiodiversity). *Baseline values of knowledge will be detailed through Knowledge Attitude and Practices studies in Year 1.*	21 LGU policy makers, planners and extension personnel in the core LGUs aware of the value of agrobiodiversity and specific management options to ensure its conservation and sustainable use.	MU	The project has provided numerous trainings, information sessions and mentoring to 118 LGU policy makers, planners and extension personnel on agrobiodiversity management options. The project also exceeded the target of providing numerous trainings to

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
and their relation to cultural heritage	its conservation and sustainable use				2 513 farmers. The farmers in the FGDs assessed the training favourably. However, the evaluation cannot substantially verify if such capacity building activities resulted to the expansion and enhancement of knowledge on the application of agrobiodiversity conservation practices and their relation to cultural heritage. There are no baselines and farmers' profiles with which to base a relative measurement. Whilst the project regularly reported on the number of training activities, number of people trained and indicated the topics of the training, there are no specific and measurable targets on the "expansion and enhancement of knowledge on the application of agrobiodiversity conservation practices and their relation to cultural heritage". Responding to the MTR recommendation, a
	Levels of knowledge among target farmers on how to adapt traditional management to changing circumstances	Farmers have retained traditional knowledge of traditional varieties and management practices, but lack knowledge of management options that would permit them to adapt to changing circumstances. *Baseline values of knowledge will be detailed through KP studies in Year 1.*	KP surveys show enhanced knowledge among 1 000 farmers in 17 target barangays of how to adapt traditional management systems to changing circumstances.		
Output 2.3.1. Agrobiodiversity resources, agroecosystems and their management practices mapped, characterized and documented in the pilot areas	Number of barangays covered by participatory inventories and analyses of agrobiodiversity resources, agroecosystems and their management practices	No systematic mapping or characterization of agrobiodiversity done to date.	17 target barangays covered by participatory inventories and analyses of agrobiodiversity resources, agroecosystems and their management practices.		
Output 2.3.2. Knowledge sharing on agrobiodiversity management and conservation practices for farmers in pilot and neighbouring communities	Number of MLGUs where extension/ communication g uides/modules have been developed	Knowledge holders in the pilot barangays have maintained some knowledge on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use systems however knowledge sharing is minimal due to declining interest of younger farmers. Farmer based extension modules are being developed by a few NGOs (Southeast Asia Regional Initiatives for Community Empowerment and the Magsasaka at Siyentipiko para sa Pag-unlad ng Agrikultura [Farmer-Scientist Partnership for Development]) and the University of the	Extension and communication guides/modules in agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use developed for LGU agricultural extension facilitators as well as farmer facilitators in three MLGUs.		

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
		Philippines. The Department of Agriculture CHARM project has piloted an extension module on heirloom rice.			Training Need Analysis (TNA) was conducted for all 17 projects sites on enterprise development. Despite highly diverse areas, diverse Indigenous Peoples and diverse cropping systems, the TNA results were almost the same for all the projects areas. There were also no extension and communication modules on agrobiodiversity developed for LGUs and facilitators for different Indigenous groups. There are secondary students receiving classes on agrobiodiversity. The modules were of good quality and the development and testing were led by Indigenous Peoples.
	Number of farmers involved in knowledge sharing on management and conservation practices for target agrobiodiversity varieties	Farmers in selected towns in CAR have been trained on improved cultural practices for one TRV.	1 000 farmers in 17 core barangays have been involved in knowledge sharing on management and conservation practices for target agrobiodiversity varieties.		
Output 2.3.3. Inclusion of agrobiodiversity issues in primary, secondary and tertiary education and Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) programmes in the pilot provinces	Number of secondary and tertiary students receiving classes on agrobiodiversity	Students in pilot schools participate in special training on heritage artsagrobiodiversity (song, dance, weaving, etc.) but not on agrobiodiversity concerns.	450 secondary students (50 in each of 3-year levels in 3 municipalities) and 120 tertiary students (30 in 2 classes in 2 colleges/universities) are receiving classes on agrobiodiversity.		
	Number of ethno-linguistic groups having authored IKSP documents	Sporadic documentation of agrobiodiversity resources initiated by individuals in pilot provinces but are not yet part of formal documentation of IKSP.	Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) documents authored by two ethno-linguistic groups include agrobiodiversity.		
Outcome 2.4. Improved opportunities for local communities to derive economic, livelihood and food security benefits from agrobiodiversity	Number of farmers applying producer labels based on agrobiodiversity considerations, and quantity of rice labelled	i. No farmers are currently third party certified. ii. A few agrobiodiversity varieties in Ifugao were certified by a PLGU-initiated system but this was not sustained. iii. First party producer labels are only applied by a limited number of farmers, only in Ifugao.	350 farmers (covering 238 ha), in all 17 barangays, apply producer labels based on agrobiodiversity considerations to a total of 55 t of rice per year.	MU	The financial viabilities of the agrobiodiversity enterprises are yet to be demonstrated since the implementation in 2018. The added value of these enterprises has not been established as the activities and results had limited

<table>
<tr><th>Results chain</th><th>Indicators</th><th>Baseline</th><th>End of project target</th><th>Achievements and ratings</th><th>Justification for rating</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">conservation, resulting in increased sustainability of agrobiodiversity and ecosystem conservation practices</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td rowspan="2"></td><td>correlation to agrobiodiversity conservation; and neither did the enterprise show any link to increased sustainability of agrobiodiversity and ecosystem conservation practices. The production and sale of rice cookies had been mentioned as very low; whilst the sales of rice grains totalled to only 200 kilos in 2018. Given the low production and the lack of agrobiodiversity linkages, the project was not able to establish the consumers' "Willingness to Pay" benchmark. Further, the interventions on the enterprises for traditional rice varieties were based on untested assumptions and produced negligible results.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Levels of income from sale of traditional varieties</td><td>Average per farm annual production and sale of traditional rice varieties in the 17 target barangays (kg/farmer/year and US$/farmer/year):
<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Produced</th><th>Sold</th><th>Net income</th></tr>
<tr><td>Hungduan</td><td>492</td><td>182</td><td>135</td></tr>
<tr><td>Hingyon</td><td>450</td><td>99</td><td>93</td></tr>
</table></td><td>A total of 350 farmers in 17 barangays have increased their income from sale of traditional varieties by 10%.</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
		Lake Sebu | 1381 | 732 | 243			
	Quantities of traditional rice varieties that farmers consume or use for social obligations, rather than selling, relative to baseline levels	Quantities of farm-produced traditional rice varieties retained for home use (consumption or social obligations) Municipality | Kg/house-hold/year Hungduan | 310 Hingyon | 351 Lake Sebu | 649	Farmers maintain the quantities of traditional rice varieties that they consume or use for social obligations, rather than selling, at least at baseline levels.		
Output 2.4.1. Access to tools, equipment and facilities for improving productivity and sustainability, and reducing post-harvest losses	Number of target barangays with access to tools, equipment and facilities required for improving productivity and sustainability, and reducing post-harvest losses	Target technologies and baseline to be determined at project start.	All 17 target barangays have access to tools, equipment and facilities required for improving productivity and sustainability, and for reducing post-harvest losses, subject to and in line with their identification of needs at project start.		
Output 2.4.2. Recognition of distinctive agrobiodiversity and cultural importance of target sites and products	Number of target municipalities including NIAHS recognised sites	i. Hungduan is already designated as a GIAHS site. ii. No sites are yet designated as NIAHS (two of the target sites are included in a compendium of 75 initial NIAHS candidate sites covering 5 regions).	One target municipality includes NIAHS-recognized sites.		
	Number of target barangays with community registries of traditional varieties under the	None	Six target barangays (two per municipality) with community registries of traditional varieties under the Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA) covering around 2,000 ha of traditional farming area.		

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
	Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA)				
	Number of traditional varieties in target barangays registered with National Seed Industry Council	None	Three traditional varieties are registered with National Seed Industry Council.		
	Area covered by geographic information (GI) certification		Active heirloom rice production areas, covering 5 000 ha in 3 municipalities in Ifugao, are covered by GI certification (which includes requirements for NIAHS designation and traditional varieties), covering around 20 varieties in each province.		
	Area covered by organic certification (OA) in target municipalities	Ifugao has received a national award for good practice in promoting organic agriculture production/certification.			
Output 2.4.3. Detailed market analyses conducted to assess the specific marketability of indigenous varieties as a premium market product (building on general analysis under Output 3.1.1)	Number of traditional varieties for which market studies carried out	Enterprise development plans have been done for rice in Hungduan and Hingyon (none for Lake Sebu), but did not cover evaluation of specific market outlets.	Market studies carried out for three traditional varieties per municipality (nine total)		

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
Output 2.4.4. Capacity development for business planning, product development and marketing, to increase farmers' abilities to seize commercial opportunities from target agrobiodiversity species/varieties	Number of producer groups with business and marketing plans to maximize opportunities for product development and revenue creation from target agrobiodiversity varieties	Some producer groups in Hungduan and Hingyon have business and marketing plans but none for Lake Sebu.	17 producer groups in the three target municipalities, covering 350 farmers, have developed business and marketing plans to maximize opportunities for product development and revenue creation from target agrobiodiversity varieties.		
	Number of people who have received training on business development and management, and enterprise development support	At least 75 farmers were trained under the 5 farmer business schools conducted in Hungduan and Hingyon Ifugao under CHARMP2. In Lake Sebu, at least 50 tinalak weavers received enterprise development support in terms of product designs and development but none for farmers producing traditional rice varieties.	Training on business development and management, and enterprise development support provided in the three target municipalities to: • 350 farmers • 4 NGO staff members • 10 LGU agriculture technicians		
	Number of new products developed from traditional varieties in target municipalities	At least three new products developed from root crops and traditional rice varieties in Hungduan and Hingyon. New products developed through processing and improved packaging materials. Some new designs and products have been developed for tinalak but none for traditional rice varieties in Lake Sebu.	Three new products developed from traditional varieties in each of the 3 target municipalities.		
Outcome 3.1. Increased knowledge and awareness among policymakers and	Number of policy makers aware of agrobiodiversity	Fewer than 15 policy makers and planners at national level and fewer than 20 local officials countrywide are aware of the value of agrobiodiversitry.	Policy makers and planners aware of the value of agrobiodiversity and practices that conserve them: i. 50 from at least 15 national agencies	MS	Increased awareness of policy makers is manifested by the policy proposals, resolutions, ordinances and

<table>
<tr><th>Results chain</th><th>Indicators</th><th>Baseline</th><th>End of project target</th><th>Achievements and ratings</th><th>Justification for rating</th></tr>
<tr><td>practitioners about the full socio-economic value of agro-biodiversity.</td><td>and practices that conserve them</td><td></td><td>ii. 50 local officials in 32 LGUs</td><td rowspan="3"></td><td rowspan="3">funding commitments by the national, municipal and local governments; including the support for eco-tourism.

Limited progress has been made on public and consumer awareness. The project has a disjointed communications objective and strategy, resulting in mixed messaging that was not matched for target audience. Resourcing and support for a key project component are limited to a part time communications expert. Other than a brief on NIAHS, the project did not produce any information and policy guidance documents as part of communications plan to reinforce its policy objectives, and for awareness raising.

There is confusion in promoting the project versus raising awareness on agricultural biodiversity. The project developed a number of public facing communication materials. Most are in English and</td></tr>
<tr><td>Output 3.1.1.
Information on the full value of agrobiodiversity and management options compiled and disseminated among policymakers based on pilot results and existing national level information (including other initiatives)</td><td>Number of policy makers and planners who have received information on agrobiodiversity and management options</td><td>Only limited information campaigns carried out to date on agrobiodiversity and management options, mostly by SUCs and NGOs.</td><td>100 policy makers and planners from 15 national agencies and 120 local officials in 35 LGUs have received information on agrobiodiversity and management options through information and policy guidance documents, compendia and websites, symposia and congresses and NISM.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Output 3.1.2.
Consumer awareness campaign implemented showcasing the nutritional, cultural, ecological value of traditional varieties</td><td>Percentage of consumers willing to pay higher levels of price premia for Eco labelled products promoting agrobiodiversity conservation</td><td>Number of consumers willing to pay different levels of price premiums for Eco labelled products promoting agrobiodiversity conservation:<table><tr><th>Price premium (%)</th><th>% of consumers</th></tr><tr><td><10</td><td>35</td></tr><tr><td>10-20</td><td>39</td></tr><tr><td>21-40</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>>40</td><td>10</td></tr></table></td><td>Increased numbers of consumers are willing to pay higher levels of price premia for Eco labelled products promoting agrobiodiversity conservation:<table><tr><th>Price premium (%)</th><th>% of consumers</th></tr><tr><td><10</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>10-20</td><td>44</td></tr><tr><td>21-40</td><td>21</td></tr><tr><td>>40</td><td>15</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
					promote the project rather than inform about agrobiodiversity. Overall, as implemented, the project's consumer awareness campaign on the value of traditional variety had weak planning with limited activities and results. A corresponding campaign plan has not been made, which should have included baseline, objectives, profiles of the target consumers, methods and ways of measuring success. Except for the participation in trade fairs and exhibits, reaching out to consumers and raising their awareness has been very limited. The limited progress in the enterprise development inevitably hinders consumer awareness.
Outcome 3.2. Conditions created for further replication and scaling up of agrobiodiversity promotion in other parts of core provinces and regions	Number of farmers covered by commitments and action plans developed by regional organizations, LGUs and other organizations	Commitments on outreach cannot be established until project start.	Commitments and action plans developed by at least 4 regional organizations and at least 12 LGUs and other organizations covering communities in provinces and regions with high agrobiodiversity, with a target population of up to 4 000 farmers.		The prospects for scaling up lie in the project's remarkable achievements in bringing different institutions together and establishing a model for institutional formation that permeates from national to local and across agencies.

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
Output 3.2.1. Agrobiodiversity considerations included into knowledge sharing programmes in target areas for upscaling (other parts of core provinces and regions, and elsewhere)	Number of farmers covered by knowledge sharing programmes into which agrobiodiversity considerations have been incorporated	At least one pilot Farmer Field School for improved practices of one traditional rice variety in CAR, by the Department of Agriculture CHARM Project.	Agrobiodiversity considerations have been incorporated into knowledge sharing programmes covering 4 000 farmers in other parts of core provinces and regions and elsewhere.		Alongside a successful institutional formation, scaling up entails establishing tools and evidences from the technical component; which so far has not been adequate. At the policy level, there are good prospects for scaling up and scaling out. The institutional formation that vertically and horizontally brought together different agencies that normally do not work together, across sectors, is a formidable scaffolding that advanced policy changes supportive of agrobiodiversity. Another scaling up potential pertains to mindset and behavioural changes. In particular, the new found confidence of beneficiaries, which helped build their agency to market and lobby various institutions for support. The technical results and field evidence on actual agrobiodiversity conservation were lacking. Beyond the target sites,
Output 3.2.2. Partnerships with private sector established to facilitate the introduction of agro-biodiversity products into larger markets	Number of private sector actors with which partnerships have been established creating increased market opportunities for agrobiodiversity products nationwide	At least four private sector groups (Rice Terraces Farmers Cooperative, ECHOsi Foundation, Inc, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau's Caves, Wetlands and Other Ecosystems Division [CAWED] and the Lake Sebu Indigenous Women Weavers Association [LASIWWAI]) are providing marketing and quality control assistance to farmers in the target areas.	Partnerships with two additional private sector actors creating increased market opportunities for agrobiodiversity products nationwide.		
Output 3.2.3. Arrangements for outreach collaboration with actors in other municipalities, provinces and regions (NGOs/Government)	Number of target regions in which regional level outreach workshops have been held	None exist.	Regional level outreach workshops held in the two target regions, with participation of actors from other regions in the country with high upscaling potential.		

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	End of project target	Achievements and ratings	Justification for rating
					there was limited exploration of partnerships at a wider level on a longer time scale, in part because of weaknesses in communications. The communications plan was not informed by research about the project's target audience (e.g. profile, values and motivation of selected segment of consumers) to serve as basis (and baseline) in designing the communications (and marketing) strategy, target behavioural change and tailor messages.

Source: PRODOC PHI062, in: GEF, 2015a.

Appendix 6. Evaluation comments to the mid-term project evaluation of October 2019

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations	Project Response	Actions to be taken	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Terminal Evaluation Comments
Recommendation 1. **To PMCU, Department of Agriculture- Bureau of Agricultural Research, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry and Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Biodiversity Management Bureau, and local government units (LGUs). (Within 12 months).** A more coherent approach and additional support needs to be given to mainstreaming indigenous agrobiodiversity conservation and associated farming practices into policy and programmes at both national and LGU levels.	**Accepted**	This is included in the project workplan and will be implemented in coordination with the National Agrobiodiversity Policy Consultants Planned Activities: a. Another set of meetings with national government stakeholders (such as Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Training Institute, Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, NCCA, NCIP, DILG, and Department of Agriculture-Office of Undersecretary for Operations) is scheduled for project updating consultation and policy direction setting. b. Mentoring activities on agrobiodiversity mainstreaming and policy formulation for Ifugao and South Cotabato are scheduled to further assist LGUs within the pilot communities. c. National-level Stakeholders' Policy Workshop which will be participated by project partners from national government agencies, local	PMCU, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry, Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, LGUs and partner agencies	Oct 2019–Dec 2020 1st week to 3rd week of Nov 2019 Nov 12-15, 2019 for Ifugao Nov 25-28, 2019 for South Cotabato	Project was able to mainstream agricultural biodiversity conservation in national and local policies and frameworks by working with policy experts, tapping into the institutional formation of the project and convening multi-stakeholder policy dialogues. The participation of Indigenous Peoples in all aspects of policy work and their articulation of their unique agrobiodiversity work was still limited. This can be gleaned in part from the project's support to policies that likely infringed on Indigenous Peoples' rights and violates FPIC provisions – for example the support to nationally register indigenous varieties, under the name of local authorities, with samples bought by the national genebank, with no protection mechanisms for the community, no benefit sharing mechanisms and no outright recognition of the community/Indigenous Peoples as owners. This may be a violation of the Indigenous People's Rights Act and FPIC provisions.

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations	Project Response	Actions to be taken	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Terminal Evaluation Comments
		government units, academe and the farming communities.			
Recommendation 2. **To PMCU, FAO Philippines (FAOPH), local farming communities particularly direct beneficiaries of project, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, Department of Trade and Industry and Department of Science and Technology. (Within 12 months).** Despite successes to date, the project should invest more time and resources into the agrobiodiversity enterprise development element (Component 2), specifically support for more effective processing, labelling, packaging and marketing of agrobiodiversity products	**Accepted**	This is included in the project workplan, particularly in Component 2. Practical capacity building/enhancement activities on agrobiodiversity product processing, food safety, enhanced labelling and packaging, food quality control, financial planning, and marketing of agrobiodiversity products produced, particularly in Ifugao and South Cotabato, are set to be conducted in partnership with the Department of Science and Technology and Department of Trade and Industry. PMCU will review its workplan and will consider the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Biodiversity Friendly Enterprise (BDFE)/Biodiversity Friendly Agricultural Practices, especially within the protected areas.	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, Department of Agriculture-Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance, Farmer organizations Department of Science and Technology Department of Trade and Industry	Oct 2019–Dec 2020	Project invested in supporting communities in enterprise development particularly by organizing trainings, leveraging support for facilities and marketing of products. Indigenous women farmers acknowledged this strong support of the project to their livelihood. Basic data on feasibility of the enterprise and its actual economic contribution and translation to improved agrobiodiversity conservation were missing. Product labels come across as project promotion than agricultural agrobiodiversity promotion. The connection of the enterprise to improved agrobiodiversity conservation was not visible from the interventions and was not supported by data.

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations	Project Response	Actions to be taken	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Terminal Evaluation Comments
produced through traditional farming methods.		Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that women and the youth are continuously able to participate in and benefit from such initiatives in an equitable manner, recognising their key roles. Training of Trainers for LGUs will be taken into account as part of sustaining capacity enhancement interventions to support local enterprises. A new Provincial Coordinator for Ifugao and an Admin and Finance Officer at the PMCU have already been recruited.			
Recommendation 3. **To PMCU, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research and Department of Agriculture – Agriculture Training Institute, LGUs and local farming communities, in next 12-15 months.** To address continuing capacity needs, the project should undertake a new Training Needs Analysis, to ensure sufficient capacity is built in key areas before the end of the project or identified for follow-up.	**Accepted**	New Training Needs Assessment (TNA) intended for farmers and municipal and provincial stakeholders is planned to be rolled out by the project in November to December 2019. As of now, TNA template has already been drafted and forwarded to partner Municipal and Provincial Agriculturist for enhancement and translation into local dialect.	PMCU, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, ATI, LGUs	Oct–Dec 2019	Training Needs Analysis (TNA) was conducted for all 17 projects sites on enterprise development. Despite highly diverse areas, diverse Indigenous Peoples and diverse cropping systems, the TNA results were almost the same for all the project areas. There were also no extension and communication modules on agrobiodiversity developed for LGUs and facilitators for different Indigenous groups.

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations	Project Response	Actions to be taken	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Terminal Evaluation Comments
Recommendation 4. **To PMCU, PhilRice, provincial authorities, farmer organisations, in next six months.** The function of Community Seed banks (CSBs) as a gene bank (holding small quantities of a large number of agrobiodiversity varieties) and as storage for seeds to be used by the community in the next growing season (large amount of a limited number of agrobiodiversity varieties) needs to be separated. Instead, the gene bank function would be better addressed through being fully held *ex situ*.	**Partially accepted**	Based on consultations, we were informed that some farmers want to maintain small quantities of seeds in their seedbanks including seeds of other crops, not only rice. As such, some of the seedbanks will also function as genebanks. But PMCU will continue to identify genebanks near the project sites that can be accessed by the farmers for *ex situ* conservation (with consent from the LGUs and communities).	PMCU, MLGUs, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, Department of Agriculture-regional field offices, PhilRice, Farmer-organizations	Oct 2019–March 2020	The combined seedbank and genebank function of Community Seed Banks was not verified with actual field visit. From documents and data presented, there was no explicit differentiation on genebanking and seed banking function and their value in the community. The *ex-situ* arrangement with PhilRice did not include measures to ensure community rights over seeds. There were no agreements signed by PhilRice and communities (e.g. Blackbox agreement or standard material transfer agreement). Evaluators were provided with a list of varieties purchased by PhilRice (informal receipt) from the Indigenous Peoples.
Recommendation 5. **To PMCU, FAOPH, Project Steering Committee (PSC), within next 12 months.** The project needs to develop a sustainability and exit plan that identifies potential follow-up activities, transfer of roles and responsibilities from the PMCU/FAOPH to partners, including a relevant 'institutional home' for agrobiodiversity and financing as needed to ensure continuation of project results and benefit.	**Accepted**	As indicated in the Work Plan, the project will endeavour to sustain and replicate project gains in partnership with local and national stakeholders. All current and future project initiatives and good practices, including lessons learned, shall be documented and considered in the development of sustainability and exit plan. The identified institutional home for agrobiodiversity is the Office of the Undersecretary for Operations of the Department of Agriculture and has been agreed during the July 2019 PSC meeting. At the end of the project	PMCU, including policy consultants, FAO Philippines, PSC, concerned partner agencies	October 2019-Dec 2020	The project drafted an exit plan, intended as sustainability plan. The Department of Agriculture Office of Undersecretary for Operations has agreed to be the institutional host of the project after the project closes. The forthcoming Philippine elections may affect the agreement if there are changes in key government officials and priorities. Aside from this, the draft exit plan is composed of a number of turnover of activities and outputs to the respective government institutions. There is no analysis of the quality of what will be turned over and if these are viable products that could be turned over. The Community Seed Banks have already been legally turned over to the respective Bureau of Plant

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations	Project Response	Actions to be taken	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Terminal Evaluation Comments
		implementation, the office will take over the follow-up activities and integrate these into their regular workplans. A Sustainability and Exit plan will be prepared by the PMCU, in coordination with FAOPH.			Industry, Local Government Unit -Office of the Municipal Agriculturist.
Recommendation 6. **To PMCU, FAOPH, within next six months.** The PMCU needs to increase staffing capacity and review travel arrangements to be able to operate more efficiently and effectively. PMCU staff should also be offered opportunities for technical training to improve PMCU capacity in specific areas.	**Accepted**	As reflected in the earlier section, the Admin and Finance Assistant has already been hired, while the current Senior Enterprise Development Specialist, based in the PMCU, will be dedicating and extending increased support to Ifugao. Staff training on agrobiodiversity, including communications, is being explored, including online trainings. The PMCU has also participated in some of the technical workshops being organized by the Country Office. The PMCU will seek to increase efficiencies in travel arrangements by combing relevant missions in similar locations and timeframe. A year-end Project Assessment and Planning Workshop in December 2019 and in 2020 is also being planned in order to better address the matter.	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research	Nov 2019–April 2020	PMCU increased staffing capacity with hiring of part time communications person, Admin and Finance Assistant and by re-programming existing staff assignments. There were still challenges with work load as exemplified by the case of the programme and training specialist, performing M&E functions on top of the regular workload. The part time communications person, while an improvement compared to other projects, capacity/staff time was still lacking in relation to ambition.
Recommendation 7. **To PMCU, FAO Philippines, within next three months and results submitted to the July 2019 PSC meeting.**	**Partially accepted**	PMCU shall exert efforts on the attainment of the partners' co-financing commitments but, as discussed during the 5th PSC meeting, the total funds originally committed by	PMCU, FAO Philippines, PSC, Partner agencies	Nov 2019–Jan 2020	Less than 50% of co-financing commitments was realized, in part due to re-alignment of government funds for COVID-19 pandemic response. Nonetheless, the co-financing leveraged by the project was significant.

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations	Project Response	Actions to be taken	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Terminal Evaluation Comments
Partner co-financing commitments need to be reconfirmed with a clear explanation of how each partner's contribution links to the project.		each partner to the project might not be fully provided, considering the changes in leaderships of different partner agencies. Commitments to the project of former agency heads (when the project was being formulated) may not be honoured or fully provided by the current agency heads, aside from issues of budgetary constraints of the partner agencies. At any rate, during the PSC, majority of the government partners have committed to complement the activities of the project, to the extent possible, through in-kind contribution and attribution of relevant projects and initiatives.			
Recommendation 8. **To PMCU, FAO Philippines, project partners, within six months).** A partnership strategy should be developed to improve the effectiveness and management of the project's activities and relationships with partners. Individual partner agreements should also be set out in a series of formal project partner MOU documents.	**Accepted**	The formulation of a partnership strategy is included in the workplan. Re-confirmation of co-financing with partner local government units and collaborating national government agencies has already started. Letter of commitment will follow once their proposed co-financing allocation would be approved by their respective principals. MOUs are now being drafted as well.	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Partner agencies	Nov 2019–April 2020	Partner agreements were developed and support of different agencies on particular elements of the project was undertaken and agreed even after project closes. Less than 50% of co-financing, a translation of the partnership, materialized.

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations	Project Response	Actions to be taken	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Terminal Evaluation Comments
Recommendation 9. **To PMCU, FAO Philippines and their communication officers.** Greater emphasis needs to be given to project communication by the PMCU, including improved use of social media, with the identification of 'good 'stories', and a regular newsletter. The project should create simple advocacy and awareness-raising materials on agrobiodiversity conservation, with key messages to circulate to different target groups at the national and local levels (to support Component 1 and 2 activities).	**Accepted**	An enhanced communications plan has been prepared to include this recommendation. The project brief has been developed and is being updated regularly. Additionally, PMCU regularly submits inputs for the FAOPH newsletter every quarter, and actively submits case stories to HQ and RAP, upon request.	PMCU, FAO Philippines	Nov 2019–Dec 2020	There were attempts to improve communications work with PMCU providing regular contributions to FAO Philippines newsletter and submitting case studies too. There is an FAO webpage for the project and a project designated website hosted by the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research. However, some of the links in the sites are still empty despite that the project is already ending. There was no synergy with other websites of partner institutions to optimize audience reach and engagement. For policy makers, the face-to-face workshops, PCC meetings etc. served as the main communication and awareness raising channel. Other than a brief on NIAHS, the project did not produce any information and policy guidance documents as part of communications plan to reinforce its policy objectives. There is confusion in promoting the project versus raising awareness on agricultural biodiversity.
Recommendation 10. **To PMCU and FAO Philippines, within next three months.** The project's log frame should be revised with some of the outputs reassigned, outcomes reworded, and the current set of indicators reduced to produce a more effective and coherent results framework and monitoring system.	**Accepted**	On-going revision of the log frame in consultation with the implementing partner Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research and other national and local government partners.	PMCU, FAO Philippines, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research	Oct–Dec 2019	Log frame was revised but still activity based and did not to capture the correlation and synergy of components. There was also no assessment of the quality of outputs as a key reference document, the project team focused on complying with what was set in the log frame at the expense of looking at the quality of implementation and entirety of the project.

Midterm Evaluation Recommendations	Project Response	Actions to be taken	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Terminal Evaluation Comments
Recommendation 11. **To FAO Philippines, FAO Rome and FAO RAP, PMCU and members of the PSC, within two months with decision taken at July 2019 PSC meeting.** A 12-month no-cost extension (NCE) up to the end of June 2021 is recommended to complete key elements of the project to give an effective operational period of almost four years for the project.	**Accepted**	PSC approved the no-cost extension (NCE) up to June 2021 during the PSC meeting held last July 2019. Relatedly, the proposed NCE has likewise been agreed by the members of the Project Task Force (PTF) during the Skype PTF meeting last 9 October 2019. FAOPH is processing the NCE in the system, in coordination with the Funding Liaison Officer.	FAO Philippines, FAO Rome, FAO RAP, PMCU	Oct 2019	With COVID-19, project was further extended to 2022.

Appendix 7. Evaluation matrix

Evaluation Question 1 (Relevance): To what extent have the project's objectives and design been consistent with the Government of the Philippines' local priorities and policies; to the GEF's strategic priorities and objectives, FAO's strategic programmes, and adds value to the dynamic conservation and use of critical agro-biodiversity, including global environmental benefits?		
Evaluation sub-questions	**Indicators**	**Source of information/data collection tools**
1.1 How has the project aligned with international, national and local priorities and policies related to the conservation and use of critical agrobiodiversity? 1.2 How aligned is the project to GEF and FAO objectives, priorities and programmes? 1.3 How does the project design address the drivers of agrobiodiversity loss and add value to its dynamic conservation and use? 1.4 To what extent are the project's design and expected results relevant and appropriate in meeting the needs of men and women farmers, and Indigenous communities? 1.5 How well has the project adapted to remain relevant within changing policy or institutional contexts?	- Coherence with legally binding agrobiodiversity-related international agreements to which the Philippines is a signatory country, namely the CBD and ITPGRFA - Coherence with national and local agrobiodiversity and other related policies, priorities and plans - Coherence with GEF and FAO objectives and programmes -Analysis of the project's identified barriers to agrobiodiversity conservation and use, and the technical soundness and added value of the project's intervention - Analysis on the extent that the project has remained relevant to any significant policy or institutional change - Identified institutional and GEF environmental additionality - Identified gaps addressed by the project and its added value, as perceived by the consulted implementers, and men and women beneficiaries (farmers and Indigenous communities)	- CBD and ITPGRFA articles and policies - GEF documents: policies and strategies - FAO strategy documents and country plans - Project design and progress reports - National agriculture, environment, development and cultural plans, e.g. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP), plus national agriculture and agrobiodiversity policies - Local policies, programs and plans - Project and national needs assessment - Farmer profiles - Project TOC - FPIC reports - Interviews with local communities, Indigenous Peoples, key policy makers and experts - MTR and project response
Evaluation Question 2 (Effectiveness): To what extent have the project's objectives been achieved and were there any unintended results? How have the results demonstrated the project's contribution to the dynamic conservation and use of critical agro-biodiversity?		
Evaluation sub-questions	**Indicators**	**Source of information**
2.1 To what extent have the project's objectives and outcomes been achieved? Were there any changes in the plans or unintended results? 2.2 To what extent can the attainment of results be attributed to the project? 2.3 Added value: How have the results demonstrated the catalytic role of the project's contribution to	- Component 1: evidence of change in policy, legal and regulatory frameworks and legislation; policy and practice changes among key stakeholders - Component 2: evidence of enhanced capacity of local stakeholders in dynamic agrobiodiversity conservation practices (incorporation of agrobiodiversity into the local plans and governance framework; enhanced management of	- Project inputs and changes in current policies and legislation - Capacity building needs analysis and results - Gender- and socially-inclusive learning curriculum, e.g. FFS modules - National and local government reports and other non-government reports (e.g. the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council and Department of Agriculture crop and livelihood damage reports during disasters) - News reports and other social media posts

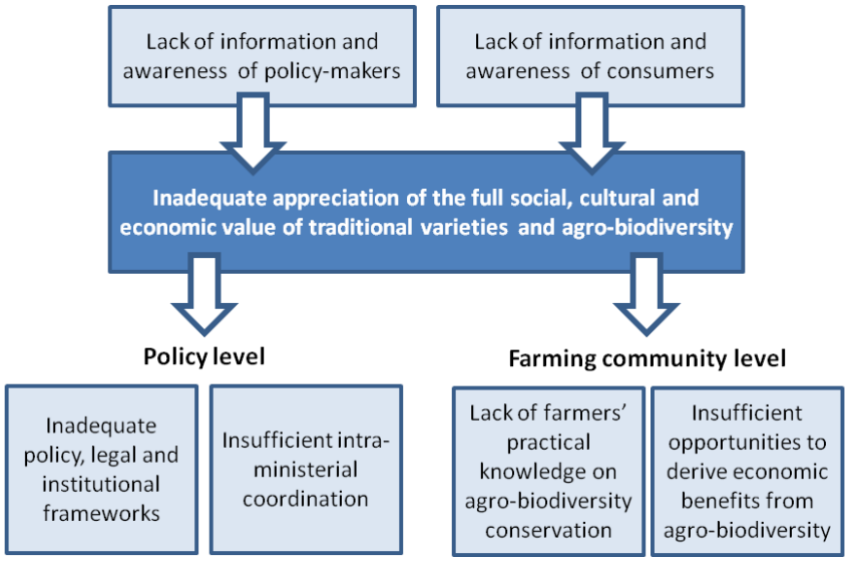
	the dynamic conservation and use of critical agrobiodiversity, including global environmental benefits?	community-based agrobiodiversity; enhanced knowledge on the application of agrobiodiversity; improved opportunities for local communities to benefit from agrobiodiversity; gender disaggregated number of trainees and trainings held) - Component 3: identified use and reach of the project's knowledge products and processes, awareness raising activities and evidence of uptake (e.g. a shift in stakeholder narratives and stories of promotion by non-project actors) - Conditions created for scaling up and further adaptation of agrobiodiversity in other areas - Degree to which the project met relevant milestones and indicator targets from the project's MEL and results framework - Evidence of environmental stress reduction (e.g. evidence of resilience during extreme weather events) and environmental status change (reflecting Global Environmental Benefits)	- Indicator targets in the project's results framework and MEL - Project progress reports, especially PIR and FAO PPRs - Project TOC - Agrobiodiversity baseline, including four square analyses - Annual work plan and budget - Storytelling - Outcome harvesting - FGD and KII sessions - Collate the criteria used in crop variety selection and compare this to gender differentiated crop traits and preferences with actual crop agronomic and market results; the technical prospects of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation and utilization include prospects for scaling up - MTR and project response
Evaluation Question 3 (Efficiency): To what extent has the project been successful in using available resources (funds, personnel, expertise, equipment, etc.) to deliver results in the timeliest and least costly way possible?			
Evaluation sub-questions		**Indicators**	**Source of information**
3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4	Have the project activities and outputs been implemented in a timely and cost-effective manner? How has the project made optimal use of available funds, personnel, expertise and resources? To what extent has management been able to adapt to any changing conditions for the improved efficiency of project implementation? How well has the project managed to cope with COVID-19 in terms of timeframe and delivery?	- Level of discrepancies in planned and actual activities, outputs and expenses - Examples of how the project pooled and leveraged resources and expertise among the project stakeholders - Cost associated with the delivery mechanism and management structure compared to alternatives - Consistency with FAO Philippines' COVID-19 business continuity plan	- Project timeline - Project budget - Financial and progress reports - Procurement plans - Semi-structured interviews - News and social media scanning (e.g. reach of social media posts compared to cost) - MTR and project response - FAO COVID-19 business continuity plan and duty of care
Evaluation Question 4 (Sustainability): What are the prospects for sustaining the results beyond the project's closure? In particular, what systems are in place to environmentally, institutionally, financially, politically, culturally and socially			

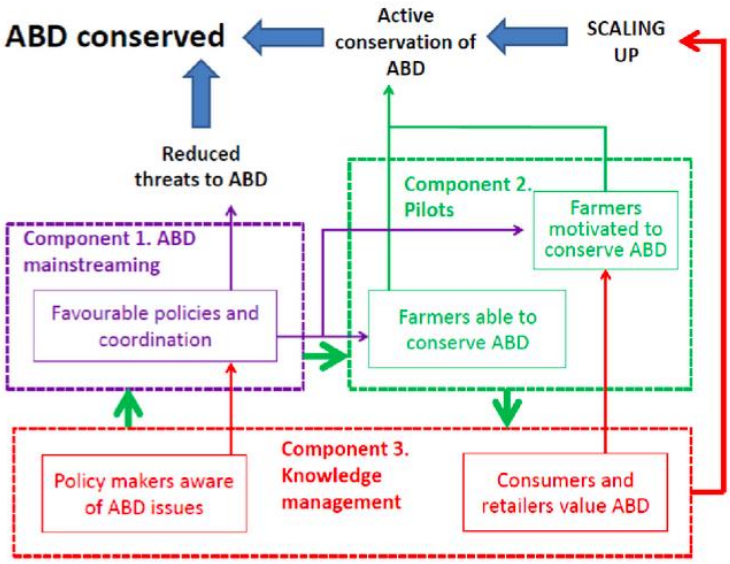
sustain key activities? What is the prospect for scaling up the activities?		
Evaluation sub-questions	**Indicators**	**Source of information**
4.1 What are the environmental, institutional, financial, political, cultural and social factors that could facilitate or hinder the sustainability of the project after closure? 4.2 What are the pathways for scaling up the project activities?	- Project exit strategy/sustainability plan - Project risk identification and mitigation - Level of ownership, commitment and synergies of stakeholders to continue the project, and any commitments on investments made - Assessment of political dynamics and how local executive priorities and commitments are affected (including election results, if relevant) - Level of knowledge and skills attained by project stakeholders to continue the project - Mainstreaming of project activities into national and local plans and activities - Technical soundness of agrobiodiversity conservation and use - Feasible plans for scaling up	- Exit strategy - Perception and commitment of stakeholders - Scale up pathways - Storytelling - FGD and KII sessions - MTR and project response
Evaluation Question 5 (Factors Affecting Performance): What are the factors that facilitated and hindered the effectiveness of the project, including: monitoring and evaluation, quality of implementation, quality of execution, financial management and mobilization of co-financing, project partnership and stakeholder engagement, knowledge management, communications and public awareness?		
Evaluation sub-questions	**Indicators**	**Source of information**
5.1 How has the project designed, implemented and made use of its monitoring and evaluation system? 5.2 What is the quality of project implementation and execution? 5.3 How did co-financing the project materialize? 5.4 To what extent has the project been successful in establishing partnerships and collaborating with key stakeholders? 5.5 Which mechanisms are in place to promote the generation and sharing of knowledge and lessons learned? 5.6 How does the project	- MEL system and adaptive management, including SMART indicators - Roles and responsibilities discharged by the GEF agencies that have direct access to GEF resources - Quality of execution pertains to the roles and responsibilities discharged by the country or regional counterparts that received GEF funds from the GEF agencies and executed the funded activities on the ground - Specified co-financing report - Active stakeholder engagement in project design, project implementation and decision-making - Consultations with and between stakeholders - Dissemination of project-related	- MEL strategy and data - Stakeholder mapping - FGD and KII sessions - Project progress and financial reports - Meeting minutes - FAO personnel and project team - Project focal points in the implementing agencies - Key stakeholders and beneficiaries from the national, provincial and municipal levels - MTR and project response

contribute to communicating and raising awareness on the importance of added value in agrobiodiversity conservation and use? 5.7 To what extent may any discernible progress towards long-term impact be attributed to the project? This may include programming and policy areas. 5.8 How well did the project use a risk analysis to ensure adaptive management? This includes the challenges presented by COVID-19.	information among stakeholders -Knowledge products and processes -Communications strategy -Project milestones towards long-term impact	
Evaluation Question 6 (Cross-cutting): To what extent have equity, gender and social inclusion, including Indigenous Peoples (IP), been taken in account in the design and implementation of the project? To what extent has the project taken environmental and social concerns into consideration in its design and implementation (is the project in line with its Environmental and Social Safeguards plan)?		
Evaluation sub-questions	**Indicators**	**Source of information**
6.1 How did gender and social inclusion consider youth, Indigenous community members and other marginalized people into all aspects of project design and interventions, including participant selection and leadership? 6.2 What was the level and quality of participation of the farmers and Indigenous communities in the conservation and use of agrobiodiversity? 6.3 How have the project outputs and outcomes contributed to equity for gender and social inclusion?	- Project documents include a clear and adequate analysis of relevant gender and ICC/IP concerns - Project clearly identifies and addresses concerns with respect to ICC/IP rights and involvement with agrobiodiversity pilot sites - Gender and ICC/IP project indicators on sensitivity: (1) responsive to needs and vulnerabilities; (2) incorporation of local knowledge into project design and implementation; (3) consent to the project; (4) participation, governance and leadership roles, and (5) indicators as part of MEL - Crop trait preferences differentiated between men, women and youth	- FPIC report - Project gender analysis and vulnerability assessments - Project progress reports - Gender disaggregated project data - FGD and KII sessions - Gender sensitive training modules, e.g. FFS curriculum - Agrobiodiversity analysis, four square method - Storytelling - Outcome harvesting - FGDs and KII - Criteria used in the selection of the crop varieties compared to gender differentiated crop traits and preferences with actual crop agronomic and market results - Technical prospects of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation and utilization, plus scaling up - MTR and project response

Appendix 8. Theory of change

Analysis of the barriers to agrobiodiversity conservation and a proposed strategy





Appendix 9. Evaluation's outcome harvesting

Project outcomes in mainstreaming agrobiodiversity conservation, management and sustainable use in policies and legal frameworks

Policies/legal frameworks	Status	Outcome description	Outcome significance	Project contribution	Evaluator's additional observations
Republic Act No. 7308 on seed industry development (The Republic of the Philippines, 1992).	The Philippine House Committee on Agriculture and Food created a technical working group to harmonize other proposals as part of preparations for the second reading.	The proposed amendments to the Seed Industry Development Act (The Republic of the Philippines, 1992) mandates the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry as the bureau for: (a) conservation development and sustainable use of plant genetic materials; (b) ensuring quality plant materials are available to stakeholders; (c) generating technologies along the lines of varietal development, culture and management, agricultural mechanization and crop protection; (d) crop pest management; (e) seed certification; (f) plant quarantine; (g) biosafety; (h) ensuring food safety; and (i) variety registration. The proposed amendments facilitate the integration and complementation of the formal and informal seed sectors to enhance their mutual development. The formal seed system has the capital, resources and technology, whereas the farmer seed system is a major source of germplasm for breeding. An inclusive policy framework will be beneficial to the development of the	Recognition of and support for informal seed systems, including indigenous seed systems, for research, development and mass production. Support the realization of farmers' rights to seeds.	Convened a series of multistakeholder consultations and other processes to push amendments to the Seed Industry Development Act. Proposed amendments to support farmers' agrobiodiversity conservation work.	Since the project worked directly with ICC/IP, the proposed amendments could have included the representation of Indigenous Peoples in the seed council and in the technical working group as holders of indigenous knowledge and unique seed systems. Also, it could have ensured that indigenous rights are mentioned as these internationally recognized rights are distinct from farmers' rights. In addition, it would have been beneficial to include ICC/IP seed systems in order to distinguish them from farmer seed systems. Although part of informal seed systems, the ICC/IP identify with these seed systems. By supporting and articulating indigenous rights and systems, the project not only aligns with what has been achieved on the ground but also takes measures to avoid ICC/IP disenfranchisement. The best approach is for the project to ensure ICC/IP participation in policy development so that this population can better articulate its perspective.

Policies/legal frameworks	Status	Outcome description	Outcome significance	Project contribution	Evaluator's additional observations
		seed industry and the agriculture sector as a whole.			
Joint Memorandum Circular on the Rules and Regulations Governing the Declaration of the NIAHS as Intangible Cultural Property under the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 and providing appropriate mechanisms for their dynamic conservation and sustainable use	Under review by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources prior to joint meeting for comments and signatures on behalf of the secretaries.	This policy instrument aims to register the NIAHS and provide the process for its recognition. It intends to promote and encourage dynamic conservation and sustainable management of the recognized NIAHS through appropriate government policies, plans and programmes. It also aims to provide incentives and benefits for host communities and the LGUs of the recognized NIAHS as allowed under existing laws.	This policy instrument can be used by the LGUs, local communities, Indigenous Peoples and other relevant actors to support community initiatives on agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use by having the landscape or system declared an NIAHS.	The project developed and drafted the memorandum and lobbied for the policy to be approved. The project is working towards setting up the three municipalities as NIAHS. First, the local recognition of the LIAHS is needed. The project supported the documentation of the important agricultural heritage systems in the three municipalities for the local council's deliberation and development of ordinances.	There could have been clearer synergy between the on-the-ground project and the LIAHS and NIAHS frameworks. Both the community praxis and the policy framework could have served as toolkits for other communities and actors, and inspire similar actions for scaling up.
Joint Memorandum Order on the dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity within the NCI Framework	As of November 2021, the National Secretariat of the NCI will circulate the document to the legislative department and liaison offices of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of	This action aims to address agrobiodiversity issues within the NCI framework by promoting the dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in convergence areas.[1] This may achieve the overall objective of sustainable rural development and poverty reduction.	Mainstreamed agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use within the existing NCI policy framework, which is the government's response to a fragmented approach to rural development. This specifically	Developed and lobbied the policy for approval.	The level of indigenous participation in policy development and lobbying to enable stronger ownership and synergy with what the communities do on the ground is unclear.

Policies/legal frameworks	Status	Outcome description	Outcome significance	Project contribution	Evaluator's additional observations
	Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Agrarian Reform and the Department of the Interior and Local Government before signing by the secretaries.		included traditional agroecosystems as criteria for the prioritization of convergence areas, as well as the four components of NCI implementation.		
Department of Agriculture and Department of Environment and Natural Resources Joint Administrative Order 2021-01 (Department of Agriculture-Department of Environment and National Resources, 2021)	Approved and signed in December 2021.	This order aims to ensure judicious use of the country's natural resources for sustainability and to conserve the genetic diversity of biological resources used for food and agriculture. It also aims to initiate and strengthen the institutionalization of BDFAP in the multiple use and buffer zones of protected areas, as well as tenured areas within key biodiversity areas through mainstreaming by occupant tiller/farmers and tenured migrants. It will provide a foundational framework for the future formulation of Bio-diversity Agricultural Practices' standards, plus relevant certification and recognition systems. It will also provide the framework for covering wider agricultural landscapes, including those of ancestral domains and private agricultural lands.	Provides a policy framework for agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use (farming) in and around protected areas as part of a comprehensive and integrated take on biodiversity conservation within protected areas and wider agricultural landscapes.	This is not a direct output of the project, and the project has no direct influence on the formulation. This is an example of a potential synergy where the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources develop a good framework for agrobiodiversity within the protected areas. The project's energy may have indirectly contributed to the push for a joint administrative order, as some project sites are located within protected areas.	This is a good, preliminary initiative to build an overarching policy framework for agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and to identify the lead responsible agency to ensure that agrobiodiversity is maintained.

Policies/legal frameworks	Status	Outcome description	Outcome significance	Project contribution	Evaluator's additional observations
				The project monitored the progress of this joint administrative order as elements can be useful to further mainstream or institutionalize agrobiodiversity.	
Department of Agriculture Circular No. 17, Series of 2020 on the registration of traditional varieties for conservation and sustainable use (Department of Agriculture, 2020)	Approved and in effect since December 2020.	The circular provides criteria, requirements, procedures, and guidelines for the registration of traditional crop varieties in order to establish an inventory. The registration and inventory provide an option to protect these resources from misappropriation and unfair monopolization in accordance with Section 72 of the Philippine Plant Variety Protection Act 2002.[2] Moreover, the circular intends to provide a list of rare species, varieties, lines and strains of plants restricted for export, as mandated under Section 15 of the Seed Industry Development Act.[3]	Traditional varieties held by farmers and registered under this circular are restricted for export, except for scientific use. Listed varieties for bioprospecting require benefits to be shared with the originating community.	Facilitated the signing of the circular, organized consultations and supported the development of guidelines. In parallel, the project undertakes the development of and research on farmers' descriptors list.	The project's support and direction towards a centralized registration excluded support for farmers/Indigenous Peoples to develop their own registry system. This is a biased position and infringes on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. In addition, the Department of Agriculture circular requires the submission of seeds to national genebanks for duplication without a clear MTA as to who owns the seeds, who can access them and how the benefits deriving from use will be shared. This is a loophole that may potentially disenfranchise communities from sharing and receiving benefits. To avoid the potential risk of infringing on indigenous rights, the project should initiate a review/discussion with the communities if they want to have their varieties registered nationally or set up their own community registry. Likewise, if they opt for a national registration, a clear MTA with the

Policies/legal frameworks	Status	Outcome description	Outcome significance	Project contribution	Evaluator's additional observations
					national genebank should be ensured prior to registration.
Municipal and barangay resolutions supporting the project	In effect.	2019 and 2020 barangay resolutions from all 17 pilot communities with a PHP 15 000/annum allocation for the Barangay Lamcade project. 2018 and 2019 municipal resolutions. Resolutions creating municipal coordinating committees for the project.	Policy tool that the LGUs and project stakeholders can use to leverage support for the project. Provides an institutional cover to the project and is a form of mainstreaming agrobiodiversity within the local governments.	Developed and facilitated the approval of resolutions.	As the resolutions are about supporting the project, they may no longer be in effect once the project ends and do not guarantee the continuity of activities and actions. Therefore, having resolutions may not be a real measure of success in mainstreaming agrobiodiversity as it may be time bound.
Ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plans	In effect.				This is reported as an accomplishment, but the documents for review are not available.
Allah Valley Protected Landscape Management Plan 2018–2022	In effect.	Lake Sebu, as part of the Allah Valley Protected Area's management plan, has passed a municipal resolution supporting the project's implementation and has allocated funds amounting to PHP 3 million or USD 62 500 for agrobiodiversity development and implementation from 2020 to 2022.	There was no specific mention of agrobiodiversity work within the Allah Valley plan.	To check.	This was mentioned as an accomplishment in the fourth PIR where agrobiodiversity is integrated into the plans of local multisectoral councils. However, the Allah Valley plan was made in 2017, before the project had field operations.
Executive and Legislative Agenda: South Cotabato CY 2020–2022	In effect.	The project helped point to the issue of agrobiodiversity loss in the uplands and the absence of training to support agricultural production. This resulted in the development of executive and legislative agenda	Provided local governments with a pathway to focus on and undertake agricultural development in the	Direct involvement of the provincial agriculture and provincial planning offices in project development and	Upon project closure, the inclusion of agrobiodiversity in the next executive and legislative agenda showed the potential for lasting impact.

Policies/legal frameworks	Status	Outcome description	Outcome significance	Project contribution	Evaluator's additional observations
		resolutions that support the project with the appropriated funding of PHP 25 million from the provincial LGUs over three years.	uplands through agrobiodiversity work with farmers. This demonstrates the project's success in mainstreaming agrobiodiversity within the provincial executive and legislative agenda for 2020–2022 and how FAO was able to leverage support, even after the project's completion. It is an example of how the project's institutional formation brought about concrete commitments.	implementation enabled the mainstreaming of and support for agrobiodiversity via the executive and legislative agenda.	

Notes: [1] Convergence areas are identified based on set criteria by the different Phillipine departments (DA, DENR, DAR and the Department of the Interior and Local Government). Applying the ridge to reef approach, the four departments undertake the planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a jointly drafted convergence area development plans.

[2] "Farming communities and bona fide farmers' organizations are encouraged to build an inventory of locally-bred varieties as an option to protect these resources from misappropriation and unfair monopolization" (The Republic of the Philippines, 2002, Sec. 72).

[3] "The following acts are prohibited: … Exportation of rare species, varieties, lines and strains of plants from the country except for scientific or international exchange purposes which shall be determined by the Council" (The Republic of the Philippines, 1992, Sec. 15).

Source: Compilation and analysis by the evaluation team, December 2021.

Appendix 10. Summary of most significant change and areas for improvement identified by the Indigenous Peoples of Hungduan and Hingyon, Ifugao and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato

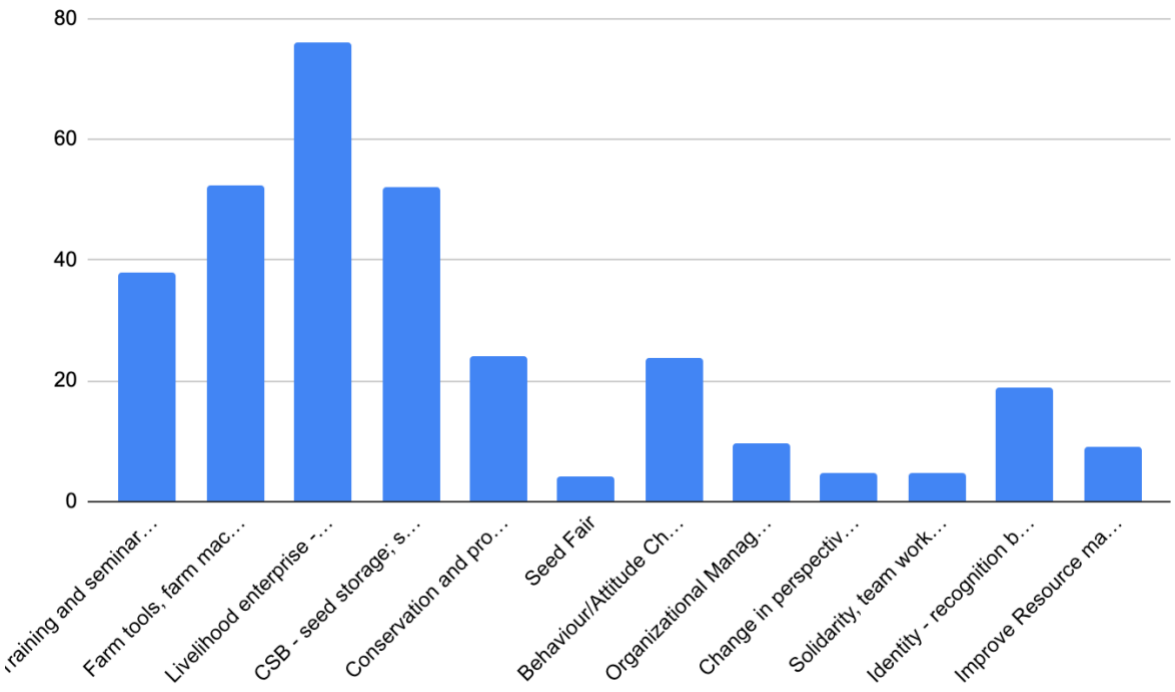
Appendix Table 1. Most significant change identified by Indigenous Peoples per municipality

Most significant change	Hungduan (total: 5 pax)*	Hingyon (total: 5 pax)*	Lake Sebu (total: 11 pax)*	% of total pax
Training and seminars: ICC/IP enriched knowledge on agriculture, trade and markets	1		7	38
Farm tools, farm machineries and carabao	3	5	3	52.3
Livelihood enterprise: training on food processing, entrepreneurship and processing centres	4	5	7	76
Community seed banks: seed storage and a meeting place, plus storage for tools, tables and chairs	5	5	1	52
Conservation and promotion of traditional rice varieties, and the presence of demonstration farms			5	23.8
Seed fair	1			4.7
Behaviour/Attitude change: building self-confidence to meet others and sell products; self-dignity			5	23.8
Organizational management and being part of an organization			2	9.5
Perspective change: awareness on agrobiodiversity conservation, its link and importance to the ICC/IP; broaden insights on tradition and the environment			1	4.7
Solidarity, team work and community			1	4.7
Identity: recognition by other groups and agencies; showcase culture and arts; adapt to time and face changes; linkages with other groups			4	19
Improved resource management: use of local resources that would have been wasted		1	1	9

Note: * The respondents from Hingyon and Hungduan, Ifugao were Tuwali Indigenous Peoples and all were women, while respondents from Lake Sebu, South Cotabao were from Ubo and T'boli Indigenous Peoples with one Ilonggo and 7 out of 11 women. There was no significant gender differentiation in the responses, except that the women specifically acknowledged enterprise support while the men emphasized seed banks and demonstration farms.

Source: Evaluation FGD.

Appendix Figure 1. Most significant change identified by x percent of Indigenous Peoples in Hungduan and Hingyon, Ifugao and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato



Source: Evaluation FGD.

Appendix Table 2. Suggested areas for improvement by the Indigenous Peoples of Hungduan and Hingyon, Ifugao and Lake Sebu, South Cotabato

What to improve	Hungduan (total: 5 pax)*	Hingyon (total: 5 pax)*	Lake Sebu (total: 11 pax)*	% total
More trainings and seminars: training of trainers and training centres	1		3	19
Business assistance: direct market options	2			9
More tools, equipment and materials for processing and farming, e.g. tram lines, water pumps, sealers, micromills and threshers	1	1	5	33.3
Transport budget and support for local facilitators	2		1	14
Complete trainings first to better identify tools needed: a needs assessment prior to distribution	1			4.7
Community seed banks: construction by the community (not a third party) and a larger seed bank that is more concrete to make it last	1		1	9
Direct budget download	1			4.7

What to improve	Hungduan (total: 5 pax)*	Hingyon (total: 5 pax)*	Lake Sebu (total: 11 pax)*	% total
Traditional rice variety enhancement and production		1		4.7
Rice field reparation and restoration: address pests and diseases		2		9
Irrigation canals		1		4.7
Greenhouses		1		4.7
Farm to market roads		1		4.7
Funding for office building		1		4.7
Carabao: additional and more animal dispersal		1	3	19
Start-up capital: seed funding for the organization and the project, e.g. for demonstration farms and community seed banks			5	23.8
Faster procurement			1	4.7
Not just theory in trainings			1	4.7
Scholarships for ICC/IP students			2	9
Local ICC/IP facilitators: more facilitators and staff for better supervision			3	14
Planting of own materials with proper planning and scheduling			1	4.7
Expansion to other areas, groups and farmers			4	19

Note: * The respondents from Hingyon and Hungduan, Ifugao were Tuwali Indigenous Peoples and all were women, while the respondents from Lake Sebu, South Cotabao were from the Ubo and T'boli Indigenous Peoples with one Ilonggo and 7 out of 11 women. There was no significant gender differentiated response, except that men requested more tools and expansion into other groups.

Source: FAO. November–December 2021. Evaluation FGD. Project sites, Philippines.

Appendix 11. Short bios of the evaluation team

Gigi Manicad (Team Leader) holds an MA in Agriculture and Rural Development from the Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University, the Netherlands, and a BSc in Development Communication in Agriculture from the University of the Philippines. She has over 30 years of field and policy work experience in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe on international cooperation in biodiversity management, food and nutrition security, and climate change. She has led development, multistakeholder partnerships and resource mobilization aspects, as well as the management and evaluation of large-scale global programmes. Since 2020, she has worked as an independent consultant leading programme strategies and evaluations for the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and FAO, among others. Prior to that, she served in the following roles: Programme Leader of Oxfam's Sowing Diversity=Harvesting Security; Researcher/Editor for the Biotechnology Development Monitor at the University of Amsterdam; Research Fellow on Knowledge, Innovation Systems and Capacity Building for the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR) at the Consultative Group of International Agriculture Research (CGIAR); Senior Policy Adviser at the Netherlands Directorate General for International Cooperation, and Senior Consultant on biotechnology policy at the Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research (TNO). She was a member of the Advisory Group of the European Union's Framework Programme on Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and Biotechnology; expert panel co-chair of the Benefit Sharing Fund for the ITPGRFA; an expert consultant for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); and expert panel member for the Access to Seeds Index. She is currently on the ITPGRFA's roster of expert mediators for third-party disputes.

Wilhelmina 'Ditdit' Pelegrina (Team Member) holds an MSc in Environmental Science from Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, and a BSc in Agriculture (cum laude) from the University of the Philippines Los Baños. She has more than 25 years of campaign, policy and on-the ground experience in building and scaling up community initiatives for agrobiodiversity conservation and management. She has worked extensively with communities, Indigenous Peoples, civil society organizations and government agencies in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam, Bhutan, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. In particular, she organized farmer groups and led community experiences to produce changes in policies, practices and narratives at local, national and international levels. She co-developed the Farmers Field Schools' approach for participatory plant breeding and on-farm agrobiodiversity conservation with the FAO-IPM and Viet Nam IPM/Plant Protection team. She coordinated an international project on on-farm agrobiodiversity conservation in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and has been active in advancing Farmers' Rights in international fora, such as the governing body of the ITPGRFA, the Committee on World Food Security and the CBD, to name a few. She was the former Interim Country Director of Greenpeace Philippines; the Executive Director of SEARICE; a member of the International Advisory Council of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault and a research associate, under the guidance of National Scientist, Ramon C. Barba, at the Institute of Plant Breeding, University of the Philippines Los Baños. She is currently on a two-month sabbatical from Greenpeace Southeast Asia.

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