

**Project Evaluation Series**

**Mid-term evaluation of  
“Participatory assessment  
of land degradation and  
sustainable land management in  
grassland and pastoral systems”**

**Project code: GCP/GLO/530/GFF  
GEF ID: 5724**

**Management response**

Management response to the mid-term evaluation of “Participatory assessment of land degradation and sustainable land management in grassland and pastoral systems”					July 2020
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) Accepted, Partially Accepted or Rejected	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Time frame (e)	Further funding required (Y or N) (f)
<b>Recommendation 1.</b>					
1.1 Use DPSIR not only for data analysis after collection but also for framing a system of “criteria and indicators” for the participatory assessment of LD and SLM in grassland and pastoral areas.	Partially Accepted	DPSIR has not only been used for data analysis, it was also used to facilitate organized discussions on anthropogenic and natural influences on health of land in the consultations with stakeholders (including local communities) and in the compilation of baseline. Thereafter, DPSIR was used as a way to analyze these data systematically. We welcome the fact that this was done differently in Uruguay where it has been applied from the beginning and where it currently seems more vigorous. This can be further analysed and captured as part of good lessons learnt and will inform the revised PRAGA methodology and subsequently inform future projects. Having said the above, the project is too advanced to change approach in the other countries.	FAO/IUCN	The project is too advanced to change approach in the other countries.  Lessons learnt finalized by October 2020.	N
1.2 To facilitate learning from project experiences and the final evaluation, develop an overall Project TOC and country level TOCs that better explain the causality chain to achieve the results and contribute to the Objective of SLM. The theory of change should identify intermediate states, impact drivers and assumptions that are	Partially Accepted	Based on the project design and purpose, we still emphasize that the proposed theory of change (TOC) does not fit the scope nor the objectives of this project, which was designed as a research pilot. While the evaluation team has pointed out the fact that TOC is necessary in linking Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, perhaps this needed to be captured in the project design phase to realistically inform what would have been achievable during the project period. The experience of the project is indeed that Outcome 2 is a starting point of important policy conversations on the need for participatory monitoring of rangeland and grasslands health and an integration of this within wider monitoring and reporting frameworks including informing the long-term resilience of populations that rely on rangelands and grasslands.	FAO/IUCN	September 2020	N

<p>not necessarily under the control of the project. It should also integrate an enhanced gender and youth inclusiveness approach, and engagement of the private sector.</p>		<p>It is hard to fully realise this within the 3-year period in all countries with varied national realities. However, the project is a contributor to this discourse while relying on future interventions that will build on this activity for the continuation of it.</p> <p>Going forward, a theory of change will be developed for the overall project. This can be used to guide national level thinking about how to institutionalise rangeland assessment. This might however be late in the project.</p>			
<p><b>Recommendation 2.</b></p>					
<p><b>2.1</b> Take steps to enhance and complete the PRAGA methodology, by providing a framework with globally comparable indicators and criteria in the social, economic and governance dimensions in order to capture holistically the rangeland health dynamics and the link to various ecosystem services.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p>	<p>This is expected to commence in the 2nd quarter of 2020, as all the countries advance on lessons learnt that are integral to designing the globally comparable indicators.</p> <p>The plans / activities are already outlined in the project document- 'Activity 1.3.1: Revision of the procedural and operational manual based on feedback and lessons learned compiled under 1.2.3'; and to review the local indicators from the assessment to identify globally comparable indicators – 'Activity 1.3.3: Compilation, analysis and publication of the framework of globally relevant local level indicators defined by domain of assessment and the finalized assessment and monitoring operational and procedural manual'.</p>	<p>FAO and IUCN</p>	<p>June-December 2020</p>	<p>N</p>
<p><b>2.2</b> Establish a clear and systematic approach to:</p> <p>(a) enhance engagement with partner governments, the private sector, relevant SLM partner of other FAO interventions, as well as pastoralists' organizations, movements and networks at country and regional level, in order to facilitate and enhance the linking of LD assessment</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p>	<p>(a) This is a welcome suggestion. To this effect, specific policy action plans will be designed in countries at the identified appropriate level to concretely link project outcomes and the PRAGA experience to policy and decision making. This is advanced in Kenya where pastoral county blocks are targeted.</p> <p>(b) The dissemination of best practices and lessons learnt will be slightly delayed due to ongoing Covid-19 situation as well as unrest in Niger and Burkina Faso. Many activities organized by the project and external organizations have inevitably been postponed. 2020 was to be an instrumental year for the global dissemination of project outcomes due to the numerous</p>	<p>FAO and IUCN</p>	<p>2020-2021</p> <p>It is difficult to provide a definitive time period with the current uncertainties under COVID-19.</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>results to national decision-making processes; and</p> <p>(b) report on progress towards outcomes, disseminate the LD assessment methods, and to aggregate and disseminate best practices and lessons learned.</p>		<p>international meetings such as the International Rangelands and Grasslands Congress, World Conservation Congress and UN Conventions.</p> <p>(c) A publication on best practices (including SLM) and lessons learnt will commence in 2020 with the final compilation of all country lessons learnt. At the moment, focus is on the LDN and PRAGA publication.</p>			
<p><b>2.3</b> Improve the targeting strategy for the engagement of women and youth.</p> <p>Gender sensitive indicators need to be captured in the Logframe and the PRAGA methodology and should be contextualized to the need of both men and women. The same should be done for climate change and the respective identification of indicators for the LD monitoring framework.</p> <p>At implementation level, the Project should capture specific local LD knowledge from women in pastoralist communities, and use derived indicators to inform policy and decision making processes regarding national and subnational SLM plans and strategies.</p> <p>For the above improvements, the Project needs to use a gender expert to include sex-</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b></p>	<p>Women and youth were targeted during the local consultations. Some challenging activities (e.g. the non-ownership of livestock and disconnect by majority youth from the pastoral sector) were also observed in some countries.</p> <p>The indicators used for local level assessment were provided by men, youth and women. Of course, tapping into community reservoir of knowledge on health of rangelands through community appointed leads on these. Based on our field assessment experience, these did not change based on gender (e.g. if the indicator for healthy rangeland was a particular plant species, it was the same for both gender). Perhaps the project can aim at reporting recorded differences in approaches to landscape management across gender.</p> <p>Climate change indicators such as rainfall and temperature were important ecological pointers during baseline analysis and field assessment, even if explicit reference was not made. Local communities also alluded to various climate aspects such as drought.</p> <p>The project is in advanced stage and all the indicators were decided, tested and analysed.</p> <p>Going forward, the revised methodology will be explicit on the engagement of Women and Youth in the different stages.</p>	<p>FAO and IUCN</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>disaggregated targets in the logical framework, and to advice on how to make LDA indicators include those that measure the socio-economic implications of LD on women in pastoral communities.</p>					
<p><b>Recommendation 3.</b></p>					
<p><b>3.1</b> More dialogue and interaction are required between the various project partners to coordinate project implementation, facilitate relationship building, and clarify the progress of the project and the expected roles and inputs of each project stakeholder.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p>	<p>This is welcomed and can be further pursued in delivery of component 2 and 3 which are still largely ongoing e.g. under lessons gathering phase of the project.</p>	<p>All partners</p>	<p>2020-2021</p>	<p>N</p>
<p><b>3.2</b> The two partners, FAO and IUCN, should duly follow the institutional and management arrangements for the implementation of the Project as described in the PRODOC. The role of the FAORs in Project implementation must be clarified and the responsibility strengthened to ensure effective and efficient results, like in the case of Uruguay, where FAO's convening power is considered as a comparative advantage by the Project's partners, which puts it in good position for policy dialogue on range management issues, partnership engagement,</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b></p>	<p>Institutional arrangement in the PRODOC was altered in part to address demands from countries on the difficulty in implementation in countries where the OP did not have offices. Some of the changes were not supported by IUCN as the organization felt sidelined by the decisions.</p> <p>This is an important lesson for future projects (including global ones) particularly under OPIM where more clarity will be necessary during project design to make explicit the technical, political and financial roles and contributions of the FAO offices and representations with accompanying budgetary allocations to ensure buying-in and ownerships. While FAO-country offices were actively pursued during project implementation there were challenges <i>inter alia</i> non-clarity on their functions and lack of allocated budget lines where the OP was doing direct implementation. This has hindered the ability to tap into established FAO offices, programs and networks in Kenya, Niger and Burkina Faso.</p>	<p>All partners</p>	<p>At the advanced stage of the project, not much can be changed on institutional arrangement.</p> <p>That said, engagement with FAO offices on policy dialogues will continue to be pursued.</p>	<p>N</p>

sustainability and the collection of lessons learned.		The project has no provisions for regional components. These are being pursued, where possible, through co-financing activities e.g. in Niger and Burkina Faso.			
<b>3.3</b> A one-year no cost extension is necessary, to allow the Project to complete all activities related to Outcomes 2 and 3, and in addition, to Outcome 1 for Kyrgyzstan, Niger and Burkina Faso.	<b>Accepted</b>	This has been effected. However, further extension maybe requested in the future as this suggestion was pre-Covid 19, which has further delayed some project activities.	All	May 2020	N
<b>Recommendation 4.</b>					
<b>4.1</b> In Kenya and Kyrgyzstan, adopt and implement appropriate modalities to further involve the subnational governments in the implementation. Prepare and submit to key project partners an exit strategy that will show how key results will be sustained after project completion. The plan should indicate a coordinated approach and clear responsibilities and outputs for each project partner.  To support sustainability and scaling up of project results, collaboration with government agencies and FAOR/country programme needs to be enhanced and strategic linkages with other SLM interventions, sector fora and multi-stakeholder / knowledge platforms, as well as regional pastoral networks (for	<b>Accepted</b>	As a research project aimed at developing a tool that can then be used by the various stakeholders, the proposed exit strategy entails preparing policy action plans that point to how the various government agencies and development partners can incorporate PRAGA into the activities or baselines. This project is different from other traditional projects where for example, an SLM approach is established and an exit strategy is needed on how the practice will continue to be sustainable.  In addition, in coordination with international partners activities are aimed at creating more space for rangelands and grasslands.  Collaboration with government agencies is already ongoing but can be revamped and improved.  In Kenya, the methodology has already been included as part of the national Rangeland Management Strategy by the national partner – the State Department of Livestock which is under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries and mandated to oversee rangeland management in the country. During the project national inception meeting, policy entry points for the project were analysed and documented in Kenya. The same was also done during the local inception meeting where County Executive Committee officials responsible for Environment and Natural Resources; and Agriculture and Livestock from the two counties participated and highlighted the	FAO and IUCN	December 2020	N- for exit strategy  Y-for regional activities.

<p>example Central Asia Pastoral Alliance, Pastoramericas, Reseau Billital MAroobe and Eastern and Southern Africa Pastoral Network) need to be further explored.</p>		<p>current policy entry points the methodology could be integrated in for instance in the County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs). Similar discussions were also held when the assessment results were presented for validation at the national and local level and also when the finalised assessment results were presented at the national and local level. As study has also been done on the national level and local level policies to inform a policy action plan.</p> <p>Plans are currently underway to roll the methodology out in the Arid and Semi Arid (ASAL) counties by presenting the results from the assessment at the Frontier County Development Council (FCDC) governors to create interest and awareness on PRAGA, which will be followed by capacity building of county technical officers on the use of the methodology.</p> <p>Plans to roll out the PRAGA methodology at the county level will be agreed on after the capacity building exercise planned for later in the year.</p> <p>Collaboration with government agencies is already happening especially in Kenya where the national partner is a government agency responsible for rangeland planning and management. Given the continued discussion with the county government especially through the FCDC, the methodology will be incorporated into the county planning processes.</p> <p>The methodology has also been written in an IUCN project which will be implemented in 11 ASAL counties of Kenya. This will ensure the methodology is rolled out in the other counties and increase its absorption in the ASAL counties.</p> <p>IUCN can improve the institutionalization process of the methodology that is already happening in Kenya, Burkina Faso and Niger.</p> <p>In Kyrgyzstan, local pasture committees are the definite entry point and user of the methodology. A pending activity is to present the PRAGA results to the committees and design a policy entry point at local level. This is because, the national government seems</p>			
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		<p>inpenetrable and have their own established monitoring frameworks that are not easily shared with others including the pasture committes.</p> <p>Regional components including engagement of regional networks were not elaborated in the project and there are no budget allocations for these. However, for Niger and Burkina Faso, joint activities between the two countries have already been elaborated with further financing from FAO and will be executed by IUCN through an LoA in 2020. In Uruguay, there are planned regional activities also with funding from FAO through CAF. Having said this, the PKH and the MPS, who are providing co-finance to the project, will be used as a platform to share project outcomes with these regional networks. Within their co-finance capacities, further regional aspects can be explored as funds permit.</p>			
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