


MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE MIDTERM REVIEW OF CLIMATE PROOFING PROJECT

Project Title:	Climate Proofing Local Development Gains in Rural and Urban Areas of Machinga and Mangochi Districts' in Malawi.
Project PIMS:	#4508
MTR Mission Completion Date:	November 2017
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1. CONTEXT

This is management response to the UNDP-GEF Midterm Review (MTR) of full-sized project titled: Climate Proofing Local Development Gains in Rural and Urban Areas of Machinga and Mangochi Districts in Malawi (PIMS# 4508). The project is implemented by the Government of Malawi, through the Environmental Affairs Department in the Ministry of Natural Resources Energy and Mining with support from Global Environment Facility (GEF)-Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project is implemented by the Government of Malawi, through the Ministry of Natural Resources Energy and Mining with support from Global Environment Facility (GEF) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In line with the UNDP-GEF Guidance on MTRs, this MTR process was initiated before the submission of the second Project Implementation Report (PIR). As indicated in the monitoring and evaluation framework contained in the Project Document (PRODOC), the Project has undergone an independent Mid-Term Review at the mid-point of project implementation (i.e. after two years of implementation). The MTR has as its purpose to determine progress being made towards the achievement of outcomes and to identify course correction if needed. It focuses on the effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of project implementation; highlights issues requiring decisions and actions; and presents initial lessons learned about project design, implementation and management. Findings of this review has led to recommendations for enhanced implementation during the second half of the project's term.

2. MTR RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

MTR Recommendations	Management Response				
	Key Action(s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
				Comment	Status (Completed, Partially Completed, Pending)
<p><u>Recommendation 1:</u></p> <p>The project has carried out a baseline survey to validate and confirm the baseline figures for different indicators in the results frame-work. It is recommended that wherever appropriate the baseline figures in the result frame-work be updated based on the findings of the 'baseline survey'. It was pointed out by the stakeholders that some of the baseline figures for the yields of different crops seems to be unrealistic (baseline figures for Indicator 16). In case of the need to correct the baseline values of the parameters</p>	<p>-Revise the figures in the baseline report (baseline and targets)</p> <p>-Project tracking tool has been used to annually update the indicators.</p> <p>-Community Based Resilience Assessment (CoBRA) was carried out</p>	By June, 2019	District Councils and EAD, UNDP	-end line survey adopted in AWP 2019	Partially completed

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(indictors) not covered in the baseline survey, alternate sources of information may be used. A similar survey may be carried out towards the end of the project (end-line survey) to determine the achievements of the 'climate proofing' project.	and provided updated indicators on resilience and vulnerability status. This was a basis for formulation of Community Based Action Plans that have realistic indicators. -End-line survey will be done in last quarter AWP2019				
<p><u>Recommendation 2:</u></p> <p>The project envisages to facilitate replication of the results of the project to other districts having similar problems. Also, the project document mentions the intention to dissemination of results at the national level to achieve replication. It is recommended, that the dissemination activities targeted at the upscaling of results to the district level (as provided in the 'projected outputs') and to the national level be incorporated along with appropriate indicators in the results framework of the project. This can at best be done by introducing a couple of additional indictors for Outcome 2 in the results framework.</p>	-It has been addressed in the 2018 annual workplan where we included additional activities on publicity, exchange/exposure visits of stakeholders from other districts such as Ntcheu, NkhataBay, Zomba and Chikwawa. The exposure visits were also extended to University Students whereby 80 final year students from the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources visited the hotspots to get exposed on new	By March, 2018	District Council	-Ensured linkages with similar projects in the country through supporting National Expert Working Group on Adaptation, participation in the National Symposium on Adaptation and the 12 th International Community Based Adaptation conference hosted in Malawi in June 2018. -2019 being the last year of	Continuing

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	<p>innovations in climate change adaptation.</p> <p>-2018 had partly supported media coverage through National TV and sponsored radio programmes that included airing of live debates on varied project interventions.</p> <p>-The AWP 2019 includes professional documentation of success stories/human impact stories and end line survey to take stock of best practices for integration in future CCA national planning and implementation.</p>			implementation, much of the activities are to build sustainability plans and dissemination of the project results.	
<p><u>Recommendation 3:</u></p> <p>For many indicators, the results framework specifies PMERL reports as one of the sources of verification. PMERL are best suited for community-based adaptation (CBA) projects, which involves learning at all stages. Thus, in the present case PMERL can be very effectively used to implement and monitor the progress of the CBA pilots being implemented at the six hotspots. Many of the indicators in the results</p>	<p>- Use of PMERL in the results framework was dropped as recommended.</p> <p>- The project's tracking tool is alternatively used to track and verify indicators.</p>	Effective Qtr1 2018	District Councils and EAD, UNDP	It is noted and necessary to use alternative tools because the district councils are not conversant with the PMERL tool.	Completed

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framework are at the district, regional and national level (not specific to the pilot projects). Thus, PMERL will not be able to serve as a source of verification of these indicators. It is recommended that the use of PMERL as a source of verification towards achievement for the indicators in the results framework may be dropped.	- CBA interventions follow CoBRA generated Community Action Plans activity level indicators.				
<p><u>Recommendation 4:</u></p> <p>For the indicator, “Improvement in food security for households participating” for monitoring the achievement of project objectives, it is envisaged that a ‘food security index’ will be developed using PMERL and the changes in the ‘food security index’ will be monitored on an annual basis. The project has not been able to develop the envisaged ‘food security index’. It is recommended to identity the alternate sources of verification to determine the progress / achievement against this indicator.</p>	-Adopt agricultural production estimates survey (APES) reports (data).	By Qtr1 2018	District Councils	The project is using the recommended government procedure of conducting APES reports. The project is using APES to compare the changes in yield for different crops within and outside the project hotspots. However, overall yields are a combination of various factors for which some cannot be attributed to the project. The proposed end-line survey will ensure triangulation of data with other sources to	Completed

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				mark the project's independent attributes.	
<p><u>Recommendation 5:</u></p> <p>For the indicator, “Percent change in soil erosion and siltation of water bodies” for monitoring the achievements of the project objectives (Indicator B), it is not practical to monitor reduction in soil erosion in terms of ‘tons of soil per hectare per year’. It is recommended to identify the alternate sources of verification to determine the progress / achievement against this indicator. As it would not be possible to measure the actual variation in the soil erosion rate over a period of time, it is suggested that in this case activity-based indicators (e.g. number of trees planted in the catchment area etc.) may be used.</p>	- Use activity-based indicators as suggested	Qtr1 2018	District councils	Data on soil loss is not available. However, the project has adopted to use “area under ground cover” as a better indicator under recommendation 5. The project has already adopted use of GIS to support the measurement and evaluation of this indicator. To date, hotspots maps covering various project interventions were developed. These maps will be compared to the maps that will be developed at the end of the project.	Partially completed

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				-Soil and water conservation practices under the project include, tree planting, and intensification of gully reclamation through construction of check dams in badly degraded/eroded sites.	
<p><u>Recommendation 7:</u></p> <p>For the outcome, “Skills and operational capacity enhanced in the District, EPA and TA level technical officers” the indicator “Improvement in Capacity Index Score card” and the corresponding targets, it is not clear what activities / actions will be carried out under the project to fill the vacant positions. Further, it is not clear, what is meant by ‘current staff’. Also, the constitutes and the use of ‘Capacity Index Score Card’ is not clear. It is recommended that the part of the indicator pertaining to vacant position be dropped. It is recommended that this indicator be replaced by “Improvement of Capacity in the District, EPA and TA level technical officers on Climate Change related issues.</p>	- The project will maintain the last suggested indicator	Qtr1 2018	District councils	It is easier to measure the number of officers whose capacity has been built in various activities pertaining to CCA e.g COBRA, CBA action planning, gender, communication etc.	Completed
<p><u>Recommendation 8:</u></p>	- Agreed that it should be dropped	Qtr1 2018	District councils	The project is contributing towards formulation of	Completed

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For the outcome, “Skills and operational capacity enhanced in the District, EPA and TA level technical officers” for the indicator “% increase in development funds of the districts”, the issue is how to determine a given initiative to be related to climate change initiative. It is recommended that this indicator be dropped.				District Planning Frameworks	
<p><u>Recommendation 9:</u></p> <p>For the Outcome, “Productivity of agriculture supported by adoption of climate smart systems and measures”, for the indicator, “Percentage increase in productivity per acre or per unit of land”, the issue is how to establish, if there is an increase in the productivity of the land per acre. The problem is, how to eliminate the change in the crop yield due to natural variation on year to year basis (e.g. variation in rainfall etc.). It is recommended that if possible ‘weather index-based yields’ of the crops in the baseline and the year of monitoring be used to determine the real productivity gains. However, weather index-based yields can be worked out only in case past detailed weather data and the corresponding yield figures are available. One of the other ways to do this is to use the “Agriculture Production Estimates Survey”, which is already in place in Malawi to measure the trends in productivity against climatic elements.</p>	-Agreed with the recommendation to adopt Agricultural Production Estimates (APES)	Qtr1 2018	District councils	<p>From 2016, we are not comparing figures with the previous year alone but with the past five years to show trends.</p> <p>The unit area should be per hectare and not per acre</p>	Completed
<p><u>Recommendation 10:</u></p> <p>The project design has considered that, diversification of household incomes via expansion of aquaculture and NTFP</p>	No action taken on this recommendation, as it is considered unrealistic given the project focus and	-	-	- Project focuses on adaptation rather than mitigation and was not designed to	Completed

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will reduce pressure on the forests for charcoal production. It is true that charcoal production is one of the major commercial activities in the hotspots. However, it needs to be appreciated that charcoal is used as a cooking fuel in the urban areas. The strategy of limiting the supply side of charcoal without working on the demand side (cooking energy in the urban areas) is unlikely to work. It is recommended that the project also carry out interventions in the area of cooking energy in the urban areas. Such interventions may include promotion of alternate sources to energy (e.g. biomass briquettes) to meet cooking energy needs and energy efficiency measures in the cooking applications. Further, the project may carry out monitoring of the reduction in the emissions of GHG due to the interventions carried out under the project in the energy sector.	limitations of the available funds.			measure reduction in the emissions of GHGs.	
<p><u>Recommendation 11:</u></p> <p>The management structure of the project has provided two project co-ordinators (one for each district of Machinga and Mangochi). With the two dedicated project co-ordinators for the two districts the execution of the pilots in the two districts is working very well. However, in the absence of a single person responsible for the entire project there is a bit of lacking in the ownership of the project at an aggregate level. The execution / implementation of the project is very much focused on the activities to be carried out at the identified hotspots in the two districts of Machinga and Mangochi. One</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - N/A - The project management structure is clear and already provided for; there is a Programme Analyst under UNDP and an implementing agency (EAD), also has a full-time project focal person. The two district coordinators are coordinated by the 			There has been strengthened dialogue on mainstreaming the project into national and local planning processes. The project is spearheading discourse with national stakeholders,	

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of the drawback with the present management arrangements is that there is no single person responsible explicitly for the activities to be carried out for dissemination / upscaling of the results to the other parts of the districts and to the other districts of Malawi. This is apparently one of the reasons for not that good progress of the project on this front (Outcome 2 of the project). It is recommended that there should be one person responsible for the overall management of the project. This will also take care of the issue of regular reporting requirements of the project (quarterly reports, PIRs and annual reports). This can be achieved either by giving additional responsibilities to either of the two district project co-ordinators or inducting one more member in the project management team. One of the other ways to achieve this is to have a dedicated resource at the level of UNDP, made responsible for the activities pertaining to upscaling, outreach, dissemination and communication.	<p>UNDP Programme Analyst while the district council (focal persons)-environmental officers are coordinated by EAD's project focal point.</p> <p>- Ownership of the project at aggregate level is through project coordination meetings every quarter. The project reports to the National Technical Committee Climate Change (NTCCC) and National Steering Committee on Climate Change (NSCCC). Annual progress reports and annual workplans are presented to and approved by the two national committees.</p>			facilitating dialogue across the policy cycle from research and capacity building to leverage opportunities for reform. There is emerging but steadfast sharing of learning from the project's best practices focusing on interventions that can be adapted to national contexts. 2019 is rolling out increased investment in knowledge management. The project is also part of initiating and facilitating National Expert Working Group on Adaptation (Malawi's expert group supporting mainstreaming climate adaptation in	

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				policies and expanding Malawi's international partnerships on climate change adaptation.	
<p><u>Recommendation 12:</u></p> <p>Due to operational issues at times the progress of work (in terms of utilization of funds) in the two districts could differ significantly. In case the allocation of funds and the monitoring of utilization of funds for the two districts is carried out independent of each other, it would be possible to continue the work in the districts which has achieved the utilization of funds (without waiting for the other district to achieve the utilization). It is recommended that the options to do the work planning for the two districts independent of each other be explored.</p>	<p>-This recommendation is deemed impractical as both districts operate under a single project annual workplan however measures will be adopted to promote uniformity in implementation.</p> <p>-Each district to come up with annual operational plan with clear timelines</p>	By next quarter	District councils EAD/ UNDP	Resolved	Completed
<p><u>Recommendation 13</u></p> <p>One of the operational issues is the time lag (of about three months) between the start of the year and the receipt of funds to carry out the activities as per the approved work plan for the year. It is recommended that possibilities to reduce the time lag (e.g. by advancing the approval of work plan and request for release of funds) may be examined.</p>	<p>-Annual workplans to be completed and signed by end of December and disbursement effected by mid-January</p> <p>- UNDP CO to have a discussion with UNDP/GEF Regional office to put up</p>	By second week of first quarter 2018	UNDP/EAD UNDP/GEF Regional office	Resolved	Completed

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	measures to fast track disbursement.				
<p><u>Recommendation 14</u></p> <p>One of the concern of the stakeholders is the difference in the approved plans and the funds actually provided for implementation for some of the sectors. It was pointed out that this leads to shortage of funds to implement the activities as planned and as expected by the communities. It is recommended that to the extent possible the actual allocation of funds for different pilot projects to be implemented in the hotspots be done as per the approved budget for them.</p>	-no action taken since this recommendation could not be verified. But, its noted that funds allocation follows the prioritisation of consolidated AWP.	-		<p>-This recommendation comes from district councils since not all their initial proposed interventions are approved in the final consolidated annual workplan.</p> <p>-Preparation of Annual Operation Plans by district implementing partners is highly participatory. Approval of proposed set of activities is very transparent with approvals made at technical planning meetings and panels. Whereas proposed set of interventions going into the AWP</p>	No action taken

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				is largely guided by the project document, some partners suggest interventions that are often not properly aligned to the project's results framework. It is the latter set of activities that do not go past final approval stages. On the other hand, budget overruns due to under-budgeting or inflation and rising costs lead to scaling down / reducing activities.	
<p><u>Recommendation 15</u></p> <p>The problem of potable water is widespread in the hot spots. This has not been explicitly addressed in the project. It is recommended that while designing / implementing the pilots relating to the water conservation / storage and supply the possibility of supplying potable water for household needs is also addressed.</p>	-agreed to consider the provision of portable water where there is pressing need because it is an urgent matter and it also acts as an incentive to the target communities.	By end of 2019	UNDP/EAD and DCs	-UNDP provided supplemental funding through its non-GEF TRAC (core budget) to construct Stambuli dam.	On-going

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				<p>-Drought which contributes to water stress is a major climate change vulnerability/risk in the target districts. Communities prioritized provision of water as key intervention for adaptive and transformative capacities</p> <p>-Provision of potable water for production and domestic use is highly recommended in both districts in order to shift away from absorptive (hand to mouth humanitarian aid) to adaptive/transformative interventions. Water drives enhancement of agro-based</p>	

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				livelihoods (e.g., irrigation, productive farming, livestock) and diversification of economic activities which contribute to climate adaptation.	
<p><u>Recommendation 16</u></p> <p>In most of the locations in the hot spots there is no availability of substrate at the household level for generation of bio-gas (households generally do not own cattle and also generally pit laterites are use). Thus, there are very limited opportunities for the bio-gas program (largely confined to a couple of community-based facilities e.g. prisons, hospitals, large hotels). Biogas not being a feasible choice to meet the cooking energy needs at the household level other alternate means to meet the cooking energy needs (to reduce the demand for wood and the consequent degradation of forests) like solar, briquetted agro residue may be explored.</p>	-No action taken since the project was already promoting alternative energy initiatives at household levels.	-	-	Biogas is targeting institutions as largest consumers of wood fuel biomass, whereas at household level the project is promoting fuel efficient energy stoves.	-
<p><u>Recommendation 17</u></p> <p>Based on the discussions during the mission, it was assessed that the project has supported implementation of a bio-gas facility in the prison and plans to support establishment of</p>	No action taken -The target in schools was for senior classes that are in boarding section.	-	-	There is total ownership of the facility /proper management at a school than in the market. Other	- No action taken

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another bio-gas facility in one of the hospitals. It was also gathered that there are plans to support installation of solar PV facilities in some of the schools. It is recommended that while deciding on the pilots to be supported the available options should also be evaluated from the view point of demonstration impact. For example, a prison may not be the best location from the view point of demonstration impact of the pilot. Similarly, the demonstration impact of a solar PV facility would be more in a market place than in a school. Further, normally the schools operate during day time, thus, the utility of the solar PV in a school would be very limited. As demonstration is the first step towards replication, the pilots at the locations which are more predominant in terms of visibility will be more effective.	-Biogas at prison and hospital is not for purposes of only demonstration to the public but these institutions are main consumers of wood fuel biomass in large quantities. These biogas facilities are to demonstrate to the government on how to find alternative source of energy for cooking in big institutions.			schools are learning from this facility and replicating.	