

2019

Project Implementation Review (PIR)

**SLM in Qaraoun Watershed**

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# Basic Data

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| **Project Information** | |
| UNDP PIMS ID | 4642 |
| GEF ID | 5229 |
| Title | Sustainable Land Management in the Qaraoun Watershed |
| Country(ies) | Lebanon, Lebanon |
| UNDP-GEF Technical Team | Ecosystems and Biodiversity |
| Project Implementing Partner | Government |
| Joint Agencies | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Project Type | Full Size |

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| **Project Description** |
| The project will set a goal of wise land use on a sustainable long-term basis for the Qaraoun Catchment by developing institutional tools upstream at national level which will provide the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture as well as related agencies such as the Commission for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, the Bekaa Governorate, and District Administrations and Municipalities in West Bekaa, Zahle and Rachaya Districts with the know-how, means and mechanisms for promoting sustainable land use as in the best interest of the land owners, farmers and communities as well as the nation. Land-use plans at the landscape level will benefit from the project through the identification of land productivity values and ecosystem services and how they can be protected, and an effective monitoring system will be established to maintain all data up to date and discover any worrying trends before they become irreversible. At site-specific level, forests, rangelands and arable land that are currently weakly managed and poorly funded will benefit from comprehensive land use plans that will provide information and education as well as livelihoods and financial security.    The implementation of the proposed project will have an immediate global environmental benefit, albeit on a small scale, through the increased management efficiency of arable land and rangelands and the expansion of the area under forests through land use plans, buffer zones, and riparian strips. This will lead to the restoration of natural productivity and conservation of the habitats of a number of plant and animal species and valuable ecosystems and will secure migratory bird pathways. As a result, globally significant biodiversity will be conserved and valuable ecosystem services will be safeguarded.    As a result of the significant effort that the project will make on institutional capacity building and the mainstreaming of a sustainability ethic into land use, these benefits will be sustainable. |

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| Project Implementing Partner | Mr. Fady Jreissati |
| Other Partners | *(not set or not applicable)* |

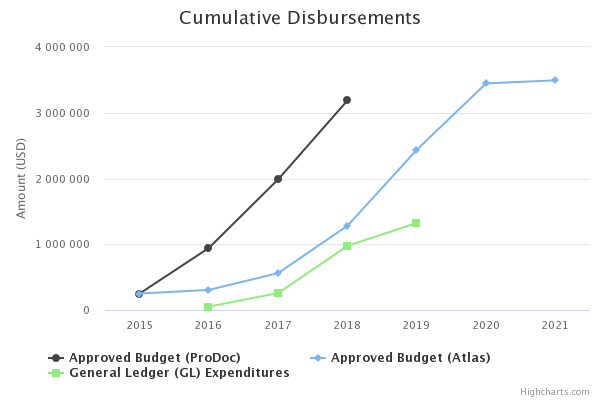
# Overall Ratings

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| Overall DO Rating | Satisfactory |
| Overall IP Rating | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Risk Rating | Moderate |

# Development Progress

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| **Description** | | | | | | |
| **Objective**  **Sustainable land and natural resource management alleviates land degradation, maintains ecosystem services, and improves livelihoods in the Qaraoun Catchment** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 0.1 Alleviation of land degradation – Area in target districts managed according to SLM principles | No explicit SLM practices in the Qaraoun Catchment | THERE ARE NO MID TERM TARGETS IN THE PRODOC | 24,300 ha of land in the target districts managed according to SLM principles. | No tangible progress so far but many preparatory activities. The project has completed the technical baseline assessments and initiated the plan of actions that will be used to alleviate land degradation in the target areas. These are summarized below:  - The land degradation mapping assessment has been completed and as a result the degraded areas in the targeted sites for intervention and measures based on the WOCAT methodology (adapted to the Lebanese context) were identified. A mix of measures have been identified to either (i) rehabilitate, (ii) prevent, (iii) mitigate, or (iv) adapt to land degradation in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya, and West Bekaa. The exercise also included the development of guidelines to monitor the impact of project activities on land degradation indicators.    - Discussions with large-scale farmers and property owners in the project area continued during this year to better understand and assess the business as usual scenario and bottlenecks they face in terms of land management practices. Discussions were also held with other potential project beneficiaries including herders and member of municipalities, to determine the current concerns and expectations in terms of potential land neutrality approaches such as conservation agriculture, manuring, mulching, composting, rotational agriculture, vegetative strips, agroforestry, water harvesting etc.    - the project has initiated discussions with the Ministry of Agricultural and FAO to integrate sustainable land management concepts into the technical curricula of agricultural schools. This would ensure a broader outreach and understanding of SLM approaches for students that will eventually work in this sector.    - The project is looking into strengthening the contractual mechanisms between land owners and farmers to ensure sustainable land management practices are integrated into the approaches used by farmers when lands are leased. | Forest Management Plans developed for: 18,000 ha  Forest rehabilitation on: 114 ha  Riparian rehabilitation on 25km  The alleviation of land degradation through (i) prevention of land degradation, (ii) reduction, (iii) restoration  • Forest:  - Restoration of 114 ha of degraded forests. Upcoming restoration of degraded riparian ecosystems connecting the wetland of Ammiq to the wetland of Kfarzabad (rehabilitation plans were developed for a stretch of 25km including revegetation and restructuring and also using other innovative, low cost and environmental techniques such as floating treatment wetlands where relevant.  - Prevention and/or reduction through Forest Management Planning: Development of national guidelines for forest management to be endorsed by both the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) through joint ministerial decision (guidelines have been completed and trainings implemented, pending testing of the guidelines prior to endorsement. The use of this participatory-based tool will be mandatory to guide forest-related activities in Lebanon, to be tested in the project area. Furthermore, and in efforts to manage the forests in the Qaraoun catchment and based on the sample survey conducted in the entire area that allowed the definition of homogeneous groups of Management Units, specific planning guidelines were developed for the total forest area in the catchment estimated using satellite imagery at 18,313 ha. Detailed Forest Management Plans including participatory methods are being developed for management groups (expected by November 2019 to allow for implementation through partners). In this case, a more comprehensive inventory was undertaken for selected forests to define the most suitable interventions to implement in the coming 10 years and specify the types of goods and services that can be obtained per selected type of forest stand. It is intended that these management plans serve as case studies for replication.  • Rangelands:  - Prevention and/or reduction through rangelands management planning: The project is actively contributing to the development of the “Forest and Rangelands Law” currently under development by the MoA in order to improve the legal and regulatory framework of rangelands management. In addition to the proposed law, the project is developing the national guidelines for the management of rangelands outside forests based on participatory processes. The guidelines are in the final stages of development (expected to be finalized by end 2019 to be tested in the framework of rangelands management planning initiated in June 2019). The use of the guidelines tool will be mandatory to guide grazing activities in Lebanon, under the direct supervision of the MoA. Furthermore, and in preparation for rangelands management planning, a map for rangelands in Lebanon was developed for the first time and is currently undergoing validation of the classification used. Based upon this map, rangelands management units were delineated based on several criteria, including: type of species present in the forests, ecological and topographic criteria. The total area of rangelands in the project area is estimated using satellite imagery at 77,620 ha covering grasslands, low density open woodland, phrygana-garrigue, and shrublands-trees.  • Agriculture: No tangible results at this stage of the project. It is intended that the results of the socio-economic assessment and specifically business opportunities highlighted by the assessment be taken into account the restoration activities. |
| 0.2 Improvement in livelihoods: Improved quality of life among target communities, measured as:    Number of new economic opportunities created within targeted communities | Baseline will be established by surveying representative selected communities, as an early activity of project inception (see Output 2.2) | *(not set or not applicable)* | Five new economic opportunities created in target communities | No tangible progress so far but many preparatory activities. The project has completed a perception analysis survey across project target areas and with the full participation of local community members. SLM actions and measures that could be introduced were identified which will lead to the improvement in livelihoods of targeted communities. They are summarized below:  - A baseline socio-economic assessment was completed across the three sectors targeted by the project: agricultural, forestry and livestock sectors, as well as examined potential adjacent growth opportunities. Prescribed interventions will be targeted in order to boost socio-economic conditions in the target areas while optimizing the use of natural resources.    - To complement the assessment undertaken, a perception analysis was conducted aiming to explore the perceptions of the different stakeholders in project target areas on issues related to the recognition of value of natural resources. As such, results will be translated into actions on the ground that feed into improving livelihoods and the quality of life of local communities.    - The project is actively seeking partnerships with other projects and NGOs in the region targeting initiatives that were found to have high socio-economic potential to support in the development of the sector while promoting the use of sustainable practices. Accordingly, meetings were held with 6 NGOs in Rachaya and West Bekaa working in different income generating activities that are in line with project prescribed interventions.    - In the next phase of the project, results of the assessment will be translated into activities linked to the prescribed interventions. | Two economic opportunities are initiated in target communities.  The project has completed a baseline socio-economic assessment across the three sectors targeted by the project: agricultural, forestry and livestock sectors, as well as examined potential adjacent growth opportunities and identified 5 of which, namely: (1) Keshek, a high value dairy product, (2) honey, (3) grape molasses, (4) rural tourism, (5) dried fruits and nuts. Two (2) of these business opportunities were taken forward by the project as at the current reporting stage in order to boost socio-economic conditions in the target areas while optimizing the use of natural resources:  1. Beekeeping and honey production through improving the beekeeping and honey production potential of the area while supporting research on honey with the Lebanese Agriculture Research Institute (LARI) and strengthening capacities of 95 beekeepers in the area among them 65 new entrants who were also fully equipped and were also provided with 3 beehives each.  2. Improved small ruminants value chain in the Qaraoun Catchment for the production of Keshek (local high value dairy product identified in the soicio-economic assessment as business opportunity using a Farm to Table approach to increase value.  It is worthwhile noting that, to the extent possible, the business opportunities are linked with the rangelands’ management component by engaging sector’s stakeholders (herders, female and youth workforce in the households, etc.) considering the need for alternative income generating activities. |
| Core Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land restored | *(not set or not applicable)* | *(not set or not applicable)* | 300 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 114 ha targeted by forest restoration activities, see Row 0.1 above |
| Core Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems | *(not set or not applicable)* | *(not set or not applicable)* | SLM in degraded forests: MTR PRF Target: 10,000    SLM in degraded rangelands: MTR PRF Target: 10,000    SLM in agricultural lands: MTR PRF Target: 4,000 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 0  0  0 |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 1**  **Landscape level uptake of SLM measures avoids and reduces land degradation, delivering ecosystem and development benefits in the Qaraoun Catchment** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 1.1 Rehabilitation of degraded forest to improve forest patch connectivity, measured by:    For areas with direct assisted restoration activities (on 300 ha): # of seedlings planted with >50% survival rate;    For areas left to natural regeneration (on 10,000 ha): # of emerging seedlings/ha in sample plots | In target districts, up to 500 ha of forests are badly degraded | *(not set or not applicable)* | 300 ha of degraded forest – in targeted areas that improve overall forest patch connectivity – restored by the end of the project    For areas with direct assisted restoration activities: Assuming planting density of 500 / ha \* 300 ha @ 50%: 75,000 surviving seedlings, to be extrapolated from sampling plots    For areas left to natural regeneration: # of emerging seedlings/ha at least double, to be extrapolated from sampling plots | The project is working on several fronts in relation to degraded forest and improving forest connectively as follows:  - The project has commissioned the development of National Forest management Guidelines incorporating SLM measures and Training material to ensure protection of forests and in particular the afforested/reforested sites. The guideline aims to establish a standard approach for replication at national level based on experiences in both national and international levels as well as expert consultations. The guidelines are based on a participatory approach to engage local communities for forest management in Lebanon and are being developed closely with both Ministries of Agriculture and Environment.    - The project has completed an ecological assessment for the forest areas in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya and West Bekaa covering the autumn season and the spring/summer mid-term assessment is currently underway.    - Technical descriptors for forestlands assessments, mushroom survey and ecological profiling were developed to establish the local species and their mix in the area. Moreover, different landscape spatial patterns were identified in the study area, namely ecotones, stepping stone and corridors and were taken into account in the identification of pilot sites for restoration.    - On afforestation/ reforestation activities, 4 pilots were selected in the district of Rachaya. The sites were selected based on the following criteria:  i. Results of the baseline ecological assessment for forests to identify types of landscape spatial patterns as well as the ecological mix to be used during reforestation;  ii. Results of the land degradation mapping assessment to identify and prioritize pilot sites for afforestation/reforestation activities.  iii. Field assessment and investigation in coordination with site proponents, namely the 4 Unions of Municipalities and more than 20 municipalities in the districts of Rachaya and West Bekaa to narrow down potential sites;  iv. Synergizing efforts with the Lebanon Reforestation Initiative (LRI) and the results of their suitability mapping assessment (based on land ownership and local acceptance);    - The project is coordinating with other projects and donors to replicate the results of the assessments and recover degraded forests to reduce fragmentation between remnant forest patches other sites in the area based on the results of the ecological assessment (species and their mix) as well as the identified ecological spatial patterns.    - On-going coordination and synergies with other projects and actors in the area such as local reforestation NGOs, the Ministry of Agriculture, FAO and local municipalities to replicate the developed project methodologies resulting in the recovery of degraded forests to reach the final target of 300 ha of recovered forests and nationally adopted methodologies. | Reforestation of 114 ha  Rehabilitation of the riparian corridor of 25km (targeted area of 50ha)    The project is working on several fronts in relation to degraded forest and improving forest connectivity as follows:  • Identification of pilot sites:  As part of the land degradation assessment, forest connectivity and fragmentation were assessed at the level of cadastral unit level (i.e., town or village). More specifically, the relative area of forest patches, number of forest patches, area of forest patches, and Clark Aggregation Index (CAI) were produced. Consequently, corridor segments for forest connectivity (i.e., potential green corridors) were drawn. These included typical forest connectivity segments in addition to riparian segments, noting that these covered the 3 districts but also took into account forest characteristics beyond the administrative boundaries of the Qaraoun Catchment for representativeness.    • Choice of species to be planted:  The species mix composed of trees (Acer monspessulanum subsp. Microphyllum, Amygdalus communis; Crataegus azarolus; Pirus syriaca; Pistacia palaestina; Prunus ursina; Quercus brantii look ; Quercus calliprinos; Quercus infectoria; Salix alba; Populus nigra; Platanus oreintalus; Fraxinus syriaca) and shrubs (Amygdalus korschinskii ; Berberis libanotica ; Prunus microcarpa ; Prunus prostrata; Rhamnus punctate; Rosa canina; Rubus sanctus; Rosa phoenicia) was prepared based on an extensive ecological assessment for the forest areas (including riparian ecosystems) in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya and West Bekaa. The assessment was repeated in autumn 2018 and spring 2019 to complete missing information and capture seasonal changes where relevant.  Technical descriptors for forestlands assessments, mushroom survey and ecological profiling were developed to establish the local species and their mix in the area. These will be handed over to the MoA and MoE for replication.    • Function of the forest patches/restored sites:  The choice of the sites accounted for the important roles of landscape ecology principles namely patches, edges and boundaries, corridors and connectivity, and mosaics. Accordingly, the sites selected covered the above range of functions in application to the Integrated Landscape Approach in a joint exercise with the UNESCO Office in Cairo – Ecology and Earth sciences.    • Implementation of reforestation:  SLM friendly techniques minimizing site disturbance, including no use of heavy machinery, no opening of access roads, pitting, digging and planting by hand, no use of pesticides or herbicides, mechanical weeding, use of water efficient irrigation systems, area fencing when needed, etc.) in direct assisted restoration over 114 ha in the district of Rachaya. Planting density of 800/ha \* 114 ha =91,200 seedlings. Mycorrhiza inoculation not used because usually adopted for coniferous trees which are not among the species identified by the ecological assessment. All reforestation has to be done on either public lands (municipal/ communal) or state owned  Survival rate to be assessed at project end through representative sampling.  Upcoming restoration of degraded riparian ecosystems connecting the wetland of Ammiq to the wetland of Kfarzabad (rehabilitation plans were developed for a stretch of 25km including revegetation and restructuring and also using other innovative, low cost and environmental techniques). Direct assisted restoration of 14,370 seedlings is expected. Survival rate to be assessed at project end through representative sampling.  Emerging seedlings in areas left to natural regeneration will be assessed at project end.  • Replication:  - Support to Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) on planned reforestation activities in the framework of the PARSIFAL financed by the Agence Francaise pour le Developpement (AFD) covering 280 ha (3 locations in 6 plots). Based on the ecological assessment, the project proposed an alternative list of trees and shrubs species knowing that species were also proposed for 6 other locations, but areas are not defined yet. Implementation remains pending at CDR.  - Jointly with the UNESCO Office in Cairo – Ecology and Earth Sciences department, a Decision Support System is currently being designed. The DSS aims to support local and national decisions on landscape restoration and management, in combination with the profile and identity of socio-ecological systems (SES), local economic development plans as well as social preferences for land use and management. It is an inquiry-based decision on sets of criteria and parameters as well as landscape patterns and functions, for defining the plant species and the panoply/mix of plants to be used in ecological restoration and reforestation initiatives. This tool will mainly be used for afforestation/reforestation initiatives orchestrated by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) to steer afforestation and reforestation efforts in Lebanon. It is the operation of such tool with input data from the SLMQ project (from the project area) that would allow replication at the catchment level. |
| 1.2 Area of 10,000 ha of degraded rangelands recovered in targeted areas through SLM techniques, measured by XX samples across the targeted area, on:    Soil/Site Stability    Hydrologic function    Total soil organic carbon    Cover with native vegetation    Alpha species diversity | In target districts, up to 51,400 ha of rangelands are badly degraded – estimate to be refined through the first survey under Output 2.2 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Overall increase, or at least no net loss | - As a measure to support land owners to ensure that SLM approaches are used by farmers that they lease their land out to, sometimes on an annual basis, legal contracts are being redrafted by the project for potential inclusion of SLM measures to be enforced on leased parcels. A first draft was drawn up based on the international experience from The Netherlands where large-scale properties are leased taking into account the high risk of pollution of the water resources.    - National Guidelines for the Management of Rangelands Outside Forests are currently being developed by an international consultant. The guidelines will establish a standard approach based on international best practices adapted to the national context taking into account local conditions. The guidelines are being developed in close coordination with MoA and MoE and will therefore be used as working tools for both Ministries and all concerned institutions and stakeholders. Furthermore, it is anticipated that through replication of the FMPs and RMPs based on the developed guidelines will result in larger areas of rehabilitated rangelands not only in project target areas but also at the national level.    - The international expert is also being supported by a national expert to provide the Lebanese context and to develop the related plans for the project target districts. These will cover a total of 10,000 ha of rangelands. The RMPs will lead to an improvement in the management of rangelands in the area and an increase in rangeland productivity as well as contribute to an improvement of local livelihoods by a more sustainable and equitable use of rangelands outside forests.    - As part of the implementation of activities on the ground to improve revegetation, a low-cost land imprinter was designed specifically for the project and will be piloted. It is coupled with a grass seeder prototype to restore and rehabilitate degraded rangelands. It improves rainwater infiltration in the soil while increasing rangeland species. Upon testing and success of the land imprinter, two more duplicates will be produced of the same prototype for the rehabilitation of degraded rangelands in the districts of Rachaya and West Bekaa.    - In addition, an MOU was signed with Lebanese Agriculture Research Institute – Tal Amara to identify roles and responsibilities at the project level especially for rangelands management. Following this agreement, a greenhouse was installed at LARI – Tal Amara to propagate identified rangeland seeds and seedlings from the seed bank to be used in the revegetation process of rangelands, taking into account the results of the ecological assessment. These two approaches combined will help in the recovery of degraded rangelands. | The project is currently developing the following tools for the improved management of rangelands:  • Legal:  The project is actively contributing to update of the existing Forest Law (now Forest and Rangelands Law) by developing the section relating to rangelands management. The following has been achieved so far:  o Extensive review of legal texts in comparable settings (completed)  o Development of a policy brief for rangelands management (completed)  o Development of the legal text to be incorporated in the draft law (completed pending endorsement of the MoA)  • Regulatory:  The project is developing the national guidelines for the management of rangelands outside forests based on participatory processes. The guidelines are in the final stages of development (expected to be finalized by end 2019  • Enabling activities:  Design and implementation of alternative income generating activities (on-going) with a priority for herders to incentivize them and engage them in abiding by regulatory requirements and plans.  • Restoration of degraded rangelands:  Although not a target by itself, the project has set up a holistic process for restoration pilots, including rangelands species assessment (rigorous sampling and seed bank assessment), seed collection, propagation through a designated seed propagation unit at the Lebanese Agriculture Research Institute (LARI), design and manufacturing of an imprinting tool in 3 prototypes for the rehabilitation of degraded rangelands. While the imprinter has been successfully tested, rehabilitation works are expected to start in Autumn 2019. The choice of location will be based on the results of the land degradation assessment undertaken as part of the baseline assessments of the project and will serve as basis for monitoring at project end. The assessment has shown the potential of natural regeneration where protection regimes are implemented (experimental cages are installed by the project in specific locations: harvested biomass allows for the assessment of nutritional value, species mix, and natural regeneration potential). For reseeding site action, palatable and high nutritious species are promoted based on the ecological assessment, in addition to, melliferous, commonly wild harvested, medicinal/herbal, endangered and endemic species considering their multi-functional characteristics.  Proposed species genera: Medicago; Vicia; Trigonella; Lathyrus; Astragalus; Onobrychais; and poaceae.  Most of these species are being collected and propagated for the first time in Lebanon as they are not commercially available.  • Replication:  In efforts to engage the public sector in sustaining rehabilitation efforts, a MOU was signed LARI not only for seed propagation as mentioned above but also for the assessment of nutritional value of available fodder in order to propagate the most interesting mix of seeds and use for rehabilitation of degraded rangelands.  Species diversity: A detailed ecological assessment of rangelands has been completed for the forests and rangelands in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya and West Bekaa. In rangelands, the assessment has shown the potential of natural regeneration where protection regimes are implemented (experimental cages are installed by the project in specific locations: harvested biomass allows for the assessment of nutritional value, species mix, and natural regeneration potential). |
| 1.3 Area of agricultural lands in targeted areas where SLM measures are being applied. | Few if any farmers and other land users apply SLM measures knowingly | *(not set or not applicable)* | SLM measures are being applied, either directly or through replication, in 4,000 ha of agricultural land in targeted areas. . | - More than 10 field visits and 20 meetings conducted with different land owners and farmers in the districts of Zahle (5), Rachaya (7) and West Bekaa (8) to identify the types of crops that are planted, irrigation techniques and other factors related to agricultural practices.    - A needs assessment conducted for the different municipalities in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya and West Bekaa was undertaken by the project to further understand the needs of the local communities in terms of agriculture and land productivity. The requests of the different municipalities were sorted based on SLM approaches (structural, vegetative, agronomic and management).    - Considering that seasonality is less of a critical parameter for the execution of the output, activities on the ground have been deferred to mid-end 2018 and 2019 given that in this current reporting phase, the project has been focusing on the analysis of needs and the situation at the local level in order to determine the pilot projects. | • Considering that seasonality is less of a critical parameter for the execution of the output, activities on the ground have been deferred to early 2020.  • The choice of the pilot site will be based on the land degradation assessment outputs combining satellite imagery and field validation to identify the causes, extent, rate, drivers of land degradation and most importantly corrective action that shall be taken. It is expected that structural and agronomic measures be the most relevant for rehabilitation. |
| 1.4 Percentage of land users (gender-disaggregated) in project localities in each of the three Districts that are applying SLM approaches in upland forests, rangelands, and valley arable lands | Current level in project target areas is very low (see Output 2.2) | THERE ARE NO MID TERM TARGETS IN THE PRODOC | >15% of land users (of which at least 30% are women) in project localities in each of the three Districts that are applying SLM approaches in upland forests, rangelands, and valley arable lands. | - The pilot areas of intervention for the application of SLM approaches has been identified based on the land degradation study and included the following considerations: Net primary production, LPD, erosion risk, fertility, soil organic content, and rainfall being the main factors affecting most degradation. For this assessment, only areas with a negative NPP change values were considered in the analysis as high potential of degradation.    - On-going discussions with large scale farmers, property owners and local and central authorities helped to validate the sites on ground and identify the high potential degraded sites needed for intervention. The project has developed synergies with other on-going projects in the region and proposed activities based on the results of the assessments that integrate sustainable land management approaches and support project stakeholders (farmers, herders, municipalities, etc.) in improving their practices.    - Moreover, the project is critical in selecting potential activities with high potential for replication in other areas based on the methodologies and results provided by the project baseline assessments and on-going assessments.    - No activities have yet been implemented on the ground, it is expected to take place towards mid-end of 2018. | No progress to date  • The project has developed synergies with other on-going projects in the region and proposed activities based on the results of the assessments that integrate sustainable land management approaches and support project stakeholders (farmers, herders, municipalities, etc.) in improving their practices.  • The project remains critical in selecting potential activities and beneficiaries with high potential for replication in other areas. On-going discussions with large scale farmers and property owners as well as focusing on the development and implementation of SLM tools (including training) will likely be more efficient considering the available resources.  Beneficiaries (incl women%) of rehabilitation activities to be captured at project end. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 2**  **Pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the Qaraoun Catchment are reduced** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 2.1 Number of local or district level land use plans in the targeted areas that integrate SLM approaches and thereby reduce pressure on natural resources. | Existing Land Use Plans do not reflect natural resource limitations and sustainability considerations | *(not set or not applicable)* | At least 10 newly developed local or district level land use plans in the targeted areas that integrate SLM approaches. | - More than 5 meetings were conducted with the different unions of municipalities in the districts of Rachaya and West Bekaa to set the stage for a strong planning process to prevent further land degradation.    - As a result of positive feedback and interest of the municipalities, the project is currently developing: (i) a Master plan for the districts of Zahle, West Bekaa and Rachaya coupled with the corresponding Strategic Environmental Assessment of all the components of the Master Plan, (ii) Detailed Urban Plans covering a total of 74,000 ha in the districts of West Bekaa and Rachaya (total area was refined in the inception stage of the project and will be further assessed during the masterplannig assignment), and (iii) identification of physical, economic and social indicators required for monitoring and revising of the LUPs, in preparation for the development of the Land Use Information Management System. Existing land use plans (covering a total of 13,500 ha) will be revised. This work is done in close coordination with the Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGUP). Development of LUPs and DUPs will help to prevent further land degradation as well as promote connectivity between different land uses, beyond administrative boundaries, taking into consideration the ecological and environmental characteristics. | Strategic masterplan for the Bekaa Governorate completed.  Detailed Land Use plans under preparation.  • The project is currently developing:  o A Master plan for the districts of Zahle, West Bekaa and Rachaya in parallel with the corresponding Strategic Environmental Assessment mandatory as per the current legal framework. A first validation phase was completed in May 2019 with central administrations. In parallel, the project is validating the content of the plan and the approach with the members of the Higher Council for Urban Planning to ensure smooth processing, namely with the CDR, Order of Engineers and Architects, and independent urban planners. It is to be noted that once approved, all detailed urban plans will need to be compliant with the masterplan proposed on the basis of sustainable management of available resources.  o A Local Development Action Plan (LDAP) was developed. It is divided into Short term actions “soft projects” reflecting the high priority of protecting and valorizing the territory in order to conserve existing natural and cultural resources and Medium and long-term ones “hard projects” that have a tangible output, such as major equipment/ buildings, networks, services, roads, renewable energy projects, etc. The LDAP developed in close collaboration with central authorities has been validated. It is worthwhile noting that the implementation of these actions will have direct and indirect impacts on the livelihoods of the population in the area.  o Detailed Urban Plans covering a total of 74,000 ha in the districts of West Bekaa and Rachaya (total area was refined in the inception stage of the project and will be further assessed during the masterplannig assignment): One on one (or clustered) meetings are systematically being organized with municipalities (or groups of municipalities) to discuss and engage them in the process of detailed urban plans considering possible opposition to the plans prepared on the basis of sustainable use of resources rather than on the basis of long-term demographic expansion and unjustified needs. This work is done in close coordination with the Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGUP).  o Development of the Land Use Information Management System: A draft list of physical, economic and social indicators required for monitoring and revising of the LUPs has been completed.  municipalities (or groups of muni |
| 2.2 Existence of a Land Use Management System (LUIMS) and Land Use Monitoring System to inform the integration of SLM into land use plans. | *(not set or not applicable)* | *(not set or not applicable)* | A Land Use Management System (LUIMS) and a Land Use Monitoring System developed to inform the integration of SLM into land use plans | - Analysis of forestlands is currently underway for project target areas. Results of the Mid-term assessment (on-going) are expected to further elaborate and validate the existing data collected and feed into the baseline level. End of project monitoring is expected to show deviations from baseline levels.    • A UNDP-UNESCO Regional Office for Sciences in the Arab States in Cairo collaboration was agreed upon in support of the project and includes post-field assessment on forests and rangelands; identification of emerging patterns in landscapes; design of scenarios for forest and rangelands ecological restoration based on Integrated Landscape Approach to be overlaid with the results of the land degradation mapping and priority sites; delineation of ecological corridors, stepping stones and ecotones for ecological restoration; and the development of good practices of forests and rangelands’ restoration and incorporated in the National Management guidelines..    - Two workshops were conducted between UNDP/UNESCO on the 26 April 2018 and 25 May 2018 respectively to introduce the collaboration and the planned joint work.: | • A draft list of physical, economic and social indicators required for monitoring and revising of the LUPs has been completed. This will feed into the LUIMS that will be designed in the upcoming phase.  • Examples of urban observatories are being considered as success stories. These will also be considered for study tours locations and capacity building of relevant stakeholders. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 3**  **Institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement for promoting sustainable forest and land management in the Qaraoun Catchment through an INRM approach across the landscape** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 3.1 Capacity development indicator score for Land Use Planning and Management in West Bekaa and Rachaya Districts | Current score for West Bekaa and Rachaya Districts in 33.3% | *(not set or not applicable)* | > 50% overall capacity development indicator score for Land Use Planning and Management in West Bekaa and Rachaya Districts at districts and municipalities level. | - Land use plans and detailed urban plans are currently being developed for the districts of Rachaya and West Bekaa. Considering the participatory nature of the process, it is intended to improve the capacity for local planning through the various meetings and focus group discussions. The operation and management of the planned Information Management System would require training and capacity building. This is planned for 2019. | - As part of the various workshops and stakeholder consultations that took place this year for the preparation of the land-use management plans, awareness on sustainable land management and the need for environmental considerations in local planning work has been raised.  - 10 workshops and/or focus group meetings were held at the local level to raise awareness and discuss issues on SLM integration into land-use plans, including rangelands management. |
| 3.2 Percentage change in the knowledge level of SLM as a rational approach for land use.    Target group:  Key stakeholders (district and municipality officials, selected households of farmers, shepherds, etc. in Zahle, West Bekaa, and Rachaya) | Current level in project target areas is very low (see Output 2.2) | *(not set or not applicable)* | 20% increase in the knowledge level of SLM as a rational approach for land use. | - As part of the baseline socio-economic assessment, a perception survey was conducted in project target areas aiming to explore qualitatively and quantitatively the perceptions of the different local stakeholders in the three regions, whether farmers or herders, on issues related to recognition of value of natural resources. Results of the survey revealed the variation in level of awareness of the use and access of natural resources and quality of life. Both farmers and herders acknowledge the importance of water and land and are highly dependent on both as main sources of income. However, such acknowledgement is not translated into proper actions that utilize such access in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, limited access to markets and high costs of production discourages them to take action, hence not realizing the impact of their actions on the long term. Thus, interventions at the local level and actions at the policy level are key at this stage to increase acceptance of local communities of the importance of adopting SLM measures to ensure long term sustainability of the land.    - No activities have yet been implemented on ground with either target group, thus, no changes made since baseline. However, in the coming phase, changes are expected to occur once the socio-economic activities are initiated.    - At the level of the local authorities, more than 5 meetings were conducted with the Unions of Municipalities of Rachaya and West Bekaa regarding the land use component of the project where they showed interest in the importance of land use planning resulting from competing land uses and loss of agricultural areas. Additional pressures on natural resources resulting from displaced groups of Syrians was voiced by the Unions of Al-Bouhayra and Al- Sahel (West Bekaa). Furthermore, they also stressed on the importance of participatory planning to ensure long term sustainability and implementation of the land use plans.    - Moreover, the baseline assessments that were conducted as part of the project such as the socio-economic, ecological, land degradation mapping etc. will be integrated in the newly developed land use plans to have a more holistic approach incorporating SLM measures which reduces stress on the natural resources. | • SLM approaches have been discussed and incorporated into the various local consultation meetings and workshops that took place during the year. A strong engagement with local decision makers, farmers and community members has taken place that although does not specifically target awareness raising activities, these interactions were introducing the concepts of SLM. |
| 3.3 Extent of mainstreaming of SLM:    Existence of targets for SLM in national and/or local: policies, regulatory frameworks, strategies, and land use plans.      Existence of extension services to support the implementation of SLM. | Baseline to be established under Output 3.1. | *(not set or not applicable)* | Targets for SLM are included in national and/or local:  policies, regulatory frameworks, strategies, and land use plans      There are extension services available to communities in Zahle, West Bekaa, and Rachaya to support the implementation of SLM. | - The project has been coordinating with the Ministry of Agriculture to merge the national SLM committee with the committee on Combating Desertification and LDN given common objective and representatives. The project has also participated in 2 meetings of the national SLM committee.    - SLMQ team attended over 6 technical meetings organized by MoA to revisit and amend the existing forest law (including rangelands) and gave input ensuring that SLM concepts are incorporated in the new forest law. This will be eventually adopted at national level; however, the law is still under revision.    - A Legal expert is working to develop rangelands management regulations in Lebanon by assessing the existing legal framework, proposing amendments or further developing it for improved rangelands management in Lebanon. This activity is done in close coordination with the MoA and MoE to incorporate the latest approaches on natural resources management and legislation in the sector.    - 3 meetings have been organized with MoA and FAO in preparation for mainstreaming of SLM measures in academic curriculum for technical schools and universities. The project is assisting in developing a SLM manual, focusing on agriculture and rangelands, to be integrated in the national curriculum to mainstream SLM concepts.    - The project is providing support to the on-going national efforts to coordinate and move forward on the Depollution of the Qaraoun Lake road map (given that the target project areas fall within this watershed). This provides an opportunity to integrate sustainable land management considerations in the various activities. | - In the framework of a pilot action, Lebanon has participated in the regional capacity building workshop and set national targets by February 2018 (presented as draft at the 13th Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD in China at the end of 2017).  - As the new reporting round has been initiated for the UNCCD LDN, the project is acting as focal point on behalf of the Ministry of Environment and is actively providing policy advice on the topic in order to integrate experiences learned into the national reporting exercise.  • The project continues to be involved in MoA’s efforts in revising the existing forest law and mainstream SLM concepts as needed, namely with forest management planning and rangeland management planning.  • The project continues to provide support to the on-going national efforts to coordinate and move forward on the Depollution of the Qaraoun Lake road map (given that the target project areas fall within this watershed). This provides an opportunity to integrate sustainable land management considerations in the national agenda and priority activities.  - 3 training sessions were provided on forest management planning to 98 persons, with more than half being MoA and MoE officials at the central and local levels.  - 3 large awareness raising workshops targeting the general public as well as experts in the field were held during the last year (more than 250 participants)  - The project continues to seek collaboration with MoA and FAO in mainstreaming SLM measures in academic curriculum for technical schools and universities. |
| 3.4 Existence of SLM tools and techniques for the improved management of degraded rangelands in targeted areas to achieve the main three attributes of ecosystem status:  • Soil/Site Stability  • Hydrologic function  • Integrity of the Biotic Community | None exist at present | *(not set or not applicable)* | SLM tools and techniques exist for the improved management of degraded rangelands in targeted areas. | No progress has been done yet. Thus, no deviation from the baseline levels is expected. | On track. See section 1.2 above on policy and regulatory tools related to mainstreaming SLM in rangelands management.  Working tools:  o A map for rangelands in Lebanon was developed for the first time and is currently undergoing validation of the adopted land cover categories/classification used.  o Delineation of rangelands management units based on several criteria, including: type of species present in the forests, ecological and topographic criteria (completed pending field validation).  o Rangelands management planning was initiated in June 2019. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |

# Implementation Progress



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| Cumulative GL delivery against total approved amount (in prodoc): | 41.54% |
| Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year: | 41.54% |
| Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June (note: amount to be updated in late August): | 1,324,304 |

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| **Key Financing Amounts** | |
| PPG Amount | 100,000 |
| GEF Grant Amount | 3,187,671 |
| Co-financing | 18,050,000 |

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| **Key Project Dates** | |
| PIF Approval Date | Apr 12, 2013 |
| CEO Endorsement Date | Dec 16, 2014 |
| Project Document Signature Date (project start date): | Jan 28, 2016 |
| Date of Inception Workshop | Nov 30, 2016 |
| Expected Date of Mid-term Review | Nov 29, 2018 |
| Actual Date of Mid-term Review | Dec 8, 2018 |
| Expected Date of Terminal Evaluation | Jul 27, 2021 |
| Original Planned Closing Date | Jan 27, 2020 |
| Revised Planned Closing Date | Jul 27, 2021 |

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| **Dates of Project Steering Committee/Board Meetings during reporting period (30 June 2018 to 1 July 2019)** |
| 2018-12-26 |

# Critical Risk Management

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| Current Types of Critical Risks | Critical risk management measures undertaken this reporting period |
| Security | Security issues in sites near the Syrian Lebanese borders may impact the project activities, namely the implementation of field work and rehabilitation pilots planned under Outcome 1 of the project. In addition to previous coordination efforts with the UNDP Country Office on the monitoring of security situations and to the system of security clearances enforced for any project related field deployment., the project has initiated contact and a coordination channel has been established with the Lebanese Armed Forces and specifically with the Directorate of Military Intelligence to ensure the safety of the consultants and beneficiaries. It is worthwhile noting that some areas were highlighted as high-risk areas due to the presence of unexploded ordnance. These risks were addressed without major impacts on the project activities. |

# Adjustments

**Comments on delays in key project milestones**

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| **Project Manager: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| Project implementation was significantly delayed at the beginning of the project. This delay in implementation is attributable to:  • delays in signing the relevant documents;  • delays in hiring the PMU; and  • seasonality which means that the implementation of forest and rangeland restoration interventions is restricted to certain times of the year (October – February).  The MTR mission took place between 8 October – 12 October 2018. And based on its results, a project extension was requested and approved in order to allow the roll-out of remaining activities and sustain results beyond project closing date. The TE and Closure were accordingly shifted by 16 and 18 months, respectively. That said, no further delays on implementation are foreseen at this stage and the project is on-track to meet its objectives. |

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| **Country Office: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| The project requested an 18-month no-cost time extension which was based on the mid-term review that took place at the end of 2018. The mid-term review itself was delayed by year given that the project activities were delayed overall. This was due to the lengthy initiation period (approval process from the government side) and considerable time to undertake the technical field assessments. The remaining project activities should be completed within the current time frame. |

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| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| This 4-year FSP was GEF CEO endorsed in Dec 2014. Its PRODOC was signed only after significant delays in Jan 2016 – fundamentally because the Ministry of Environment can sign only once the Council of Ministers has issued a grant approval decree, which took a long time to be discussed and approved given the complex political situation in the country. The Inception Workshop took place in Nov 2016 after a further delay of c. 7 months, due primarily to delays in team recruitment.    Further delays since can be attributed to seasonality – the fact that forest and rangeland restoration interventions are restricted to certain times of the year (October-February).    The MTR was completed by Dec 2018 after an evaluation mission in Oct 2018. It was hence completed 2 years after the Inception Workshop, 3 years after PRODOC signature and 4 years after GEF CEO Endorsement, yet still in line with the originally fixed schedule and between the second and third PIR.    Regardless of the timely conduct of the MTR, whose schedule was maintained to help identify any implementation challenges early enough, the project’s initial important implementation delays and especially its weak financial delivery led the project to seek an extension, in line with the recommendation of the PIR. The standard maximum extension period of 18 months was granted to postpone operational closure from Jan 2020 to July 2021, which will equally postpone the conduct of the Terminal Evaluation by a similar amount of time. |

# Ratings and Overall Assessments

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| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Manager/Coordinator** | Satisfactory | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | During this reporting phase, the project has achieved significant progress, both on outcome 1 and outcome 2 of the project. It has also set the foundation for it to meet (most of) its targets and objectives. Therefore, DO progress is considered satisfactory.  The project has developed a strong scientific foundation for the upcoming implementation of on-the-ground interventions. Three major assessments have been undertaken; land degradation assessment, ecological assessment and socio-economic assessment. This work allowed for a strong and systematic justification of implemented and planned interventions. Furthermore, innovation is a strength of the project. Not only is SLM a relatively new concept in Lebanon, but the project has actively sought new approaches for project implementation. An example of the innovation shown by the project is the design and construction of a new imprinter with seeder for rangelands restoration as well as the implementation of the WOCAT methodology with a combined use of satellite imagery and field validation for the assessment of land degradation, and more.    Below is an account of major progress development supporting the rating above.    • Institutional set-up and coordination  The PMU was able to develop strong working relationships with the MoE, MoA, and other relevant stakeholders implementing complementary and/or activities. This will maximize the replication effect beyond the project closure.  • Disbursement:  Currently, disbursement stands at close to 40% and is expected to be at 60% by end of this fiscal year. Remaining funds are planned for the implementation of the agricultural trials as well as for the activities sustaining SLM tools beyond project closure (trainings, legal and regulatory, economic and fiscal, etc.)  • Outcome 1  The rehabilitation activities undertaken by the project on forests and rangelands are underway: Reforestation has been completed (114 ha of direct implementation) based on the results of the land degradation assessment using local species and mixes identified through a rigorous sampling methodology. Additionally, the riparian ecosystem linking the Ammiq wetland to the Anjar-Kfarzabad wetland is being rehabilitated over a stretch of 25km using locality-specific species with phytoremediation and soil stabilization characteristics. The project is attempting to replicate such techniques through other public contracts for the clearing and cleaning of tributaries in the Litani catchment. On the otherhand, rehabilitation of rangelands is expected to be initiated in Autumn 2019. Meanwhile, all underlying elements are for the planned works are being prepared: (i) Identification of rangelands species and locality mixes is finalized, (ii) installation of the seed propagation unit at the LARI is finalized, (iii) nutritional profile optimization (underway), (iv) design and implementation of 3 prototypes for land imprinting, and (v) development of the rangelands map for Lebanon based on internationally approved criteria and classification.  Rehabilitation of agricultural lands remains pending. Terms of Reference are in preparation, noting that the foreseen activities will be building on the results of the socio-economic assessment, which highlighted several agri-related business opportunities for the districts of Zahle, West Bekaa, and Rachaya. One can mention the production of grape molasses, dried fruits, and aromatic and medicinal plants. The use of such species will be promoted through rehabilitation efforts currently designed by the project.  In parallel with the rehabilitation works on forests, rangelands, and agricultural lands, the project has developed forest and rangelands management guidelines (the latter has not been finalized yet) and has implemented and planned a series of training of trainers allowing MoE, MoA officials, as well as experts to implement the guidelines. The project is also working very closely with the MoA to embed these in the existing legal regulatory mechanisms. One can mention the update of the Forest Law (now called Forest and Rangelands law) to which project is actively contributing to.  Furthermore, the project is actively working on developing forest management plans and rangelands management plans using a participatory approach, meeting the targets set at the outcome level. Forest Management plans are expected to be finalized in 2019 while rangelands management plans will be finalized by mid 2020 considering the highly sensitive population groups concerned. It is worthwhile noting that based on the results of the socio-economic assessment, and as alternative income generating activities, 3 small grants projects have been initiated with potential benefits on these groups, namely the “Improving small ruminants value chain in the Qaraoun Catchment” and improving the beekeeping and honey production potential of the area through (i) Supporting research on honey through the procurement of equipment to improve the beehive monitoring system for improvement of honey production, and (ii) strengthening capacities and increasing awareness of beekeepers on good beekeeping practices through training and procurement of beekeeping equipment.  • Outcome 2  Outcome 2 has progressed significantly since the last reporting period: Diagnostic report was finalized allowing the development of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (required as per provisions of decree 8213/2012 for masterplans) and the masterplan. Extensive coordination and exchange is taking place both at the central and local levels before finalization of the Masterplan for the Bekaa (comprising of the districts of Zahle, West Bekaa, and Rachaya). Furthermore, a local development action plan is currently being validated in order to allow for resource mobilization for the implementation of the different project fiches.  Also, the design and procurement of the Land Use Information Management System is planned for Autumn 2019. The underlying elements are currently being populated by the Consultant in close coordination with the project team, more specifically the indicators to be adopted as well as the operation modality of the system.  While it is intended to meet the outcome targets,and in line with the MTR results, we believe that output 2.4 will not be captured within the project timeframe, even if implemented.  • Outcome 3  The project continues to mainstream SLM in new legislation namely in the forest law and is developing rangelands management legal elements to be incorporated in the said law to be submitted to the Council of Ministers for endorsement in a first stage. Furthermore, and in coordination with the FAO, the project is mainstreaming SLM in curricula of technical schools managed by the MoA. In addition to the above, the project contiues to coordinate extensively to synergize with relevant actors and projects, the MoA, FAO, Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGUP), LARI, AgriCAL project, World Bank’s Integrated Pest Management Project and others, on the various project activities related to agriculture, forests, rangelands and land-use planning to ensure complementarities between existing projects. It also supports in the follow-up on the implementation of the road map for the depollution of the Qaraoun Lake ensuring the integration of SLM measures where relevant. Furthermore, the project is supporting the Ministry of Environment in mobilizing resources for the sustainable management of the Litani (upper and lower catchment): the project has drafted the concept for the restoration of ecosystem services including the rehabilitation of the Litani river bed while embedding SLM considerations. The project is also contributing to the elaboration of the new vision of the MoE namely on the chapters related to management of quarries and natural resources.  Training and capacity building on SLM, on the management of natural resources (different sectors), and on land use planning are planned for the last year of the project, upon which knowledge on the topic will significantly be improved in the various target groups. It is worthwhile noting that the project is the focal point of LDN reporting at the Ministry of Environment. In addition to the national reporting exercise, and in line with the objectives of the SLMQ project, the project will undertake capacity building addressing LDN in (i) forestlands, (ii) rangelands, (iii) agriculture, and land use planning targeting central and local authorities in charge of policy making and management at the local levels. Furthermore, and in order to facilitate LDN monitoring and reporting as per international commitments, necessary training will be implemented to ensure homogenization of reporting tools and techniques by the different stakeholders, and efficient consolidation of data and info by the MoA. This activity will be funded by UNCCD in efforts to synergize activities | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP Country Office Programme Officer** | Satisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | After a slow start during the first two years of the project, the project has now picked up in pace in terms of development objectives, despite a still slower than planned financial disbursement rate. Given that the technical mapping and socio-economic surveys were completed in the pilot areas in West Bekaa, the most suitable interventions were designed accordingly to maximise impact. Actually, new approaches to SLM planning were showcased in the land degradation and ecological assessment themselves. By using new methodologies such as the WOCAT and satellite imagery to determine forestry and rangeland needs was a first of its kind for Lebanon in terms of wholistic and comprehensive approach to land management approaches that took into account environmental and socio-economic considerations. The methodology and results of these assessments were shared with national counterparts and as well as peers in academia and other UN agencies to build capacity and will be integrated, to the extent possible, into the national land degradation neutrality assessments and reports.    At the policy level, these studies are serving as a basis for the preparation of the local land-use plans and are being integrated into the strategic environmental assessments that are accompanying all the plans. The scientific knowledge and expertise being mobilized is also feeding into the forest management and arrangement management plans and guidelines that are being developed. During the last year, progress has been made on these although they have not been finalised yet. Trainings on the technical guidelines were undertaken in close collaboration with both ministries of environment and agriculture. The scientific SLM approach is also being inserted into the national forest law under preparation by the Ministry of Agriculture and the participatory approaches being used by the project is bring all stakeholders together and ensuring integrated approaches, overall. It is important to note that a new minister of environment was appointed in 2019; he has been introduced to the project and also attended one of the national consultation meetings for the land use planning activity. The new minister expressed very positive feedback to the project and has endorsed and is fully committed to the policy and technical approaches being proposed. He visited the pilot sites in the West Bekaa and stressed on the need to incorporate and upscale lessons learnt to other areas in the Qaraoun water catchment to improve natural resource management.    On the ground, the project initiated the implementation of activities in the pilot areas and successfully completed the reforestation of priority land areas using a variety of local species and rehabilitated a sensitive riparian area that links two wetlands to each other. This approach is new and has provided the local communities and the private land owners in the region with an applicable scientific approach to sustainable integrated approaches and integrated ecosystem management. Work on piloting rangeland management activities was also completed during the last year but its implementation will start in the next reporting period. This component is taking some time to design given the need to identify and source seeds of indigenous rangeland specifies, to determine the optimal profile of planting and identifying the best option for planting. All this work is being followed up by the national institute for agricultural research that specialises in this area. The project is also providing intense capacity building and support to the scientists working within this institution; a win-win partnership for both. Two grants were awarded to a local NGO to support in the dairy and small ruminants value chains in the Qaraoun Catchment and to support in the honey value chain by strengthening the monitoring systems and improving the quality of produced honey in the region.    In comparison to last year, there is a definite increase in momentum in terms of implementation in addition to more awareness raising and consultation meetings that themselves build capacity and push forward on the uptake of sustainable land management approaches both at the local and at the central government levels. This was observed through the organisation of several workshops during the last year by the project with the MoE, close coordination with FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture for the preparation of the technical guidelines but also for the mainstreaming of SLM into the curricula of the technical schools, the local level task force meetings with various stakeholders, the involvement in the larger Litani Depollution Masterplan and national committees on this priority topics, the partnership with NGOs and the private sector, the engagement of the project in national conferences including the National Forest Week which included international participants from the region and beyond, as well the regional collaboration with UNESCO. A total of 19 meetings and workshops were held during the last year involving an array of stakeholders from both the local and national levels. It is worth mentioning the strong collaboration on the preparation of the national land degradation neutrality targets with the MoA and the initiating of the reporting exercise that the project team are supporting from the side of the MoE. This ensures the mainstreaming of SLM practices and the highlighting of the project activities at the national level.    Overall, the work has expanded in scope and depth to a SATISFACTORY extent regarding its Development Objectives.    IP progress is rated MODERATELY SATISFACTORY especially because of the low the financial disbursement that remains at 40%. This is not alarming though because the project has just surpassed its midterm mark given that a time-extension was granted until early 2021. Increased levels of disbursement are expected during the last 2 years and so far, the CO believes that the overall targets will be met especially given that a lot of activities will be implemented during the upcoming summer month and into next year. In terms of risk, most are being managed and do not pose a serious threat to the operation of the project. The most critical risk relates to security which is being closely monitored by the Country Office and the national partner, the Ministry of Environment, to ensure quick mitigation. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **GEF Operational Focal point** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Implementing Partner** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Other Partners** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser** | Satisfactory | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | This is the third PIR of this 4-year FSP full sized project that was GEF CEO endorsed in Dec 2014, signed in Jan 2016 and launched in Nov 2016, meaning it has been operational for about 2 ½ years.    With regard to IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS over the reporting period: Project governance was acceptable to good, with the Project Board meeting held (only) once over the year but continuing to play a role in bringing together various relevant line ministries. Risk tracking and management was also good - the project has so far not been too affected by the one Critical Risk linked to the volatile security situation in eastern Lebanon. The project’s cumulated financial delivery increased from $353,199 (11% of the total GEF project grant of $3,187,671) by 30 June 2018 to 1,323,964 (42%) by 30 June 2019; the annual financial delivery was hence around $1 million, which is a substantial achievement. Given initial project delays, an extension was still required and granted for 18 months, yet with this trend the project can expect to deliver its grant resources by the extended closure date. The MTR was concluded on time, and led to a reorganisation of the project results framework.    The RTA rates IP MODERATELY SATISFACTORY, as per the IP Rating Criteria: implementation is proceeding as planned with minor deviations; cumulative financial delivery and management of risks are mostly on track, with minor delays and because the project is managed well. Despite the important delivery improvements over the reporting period, the initial delays and need for an extension didn’t allow a Satisfactory rating.    DO PROGRESS:    With regard to progress towards the PROJECT OBJECTIVE (Sustainable land and natural resource management alleviates land degradation, maintains ecosystem services, and improves livelihoods in the Qaraoun Catchment), the project over the 2017-2018 reporting period determined and mapped land degradation baselines for target sites, defined an ecological profile for forests and rangelands, defined dependency of farmers and herders on natural resources and their socio-economic situation, consulted land owners on suitable/acceptable SLM interventions, and prepared SLM action plans for range and forest lands. During the present reported period, three major further assessments were undertaken, namely a land degradation assessment, ecological an assessment and a socio-economic assessment. All these have provided a good scientific foundation. Over the reporting period, these were now complemented by increasingly targeted interventions both on the ground and on the enabling framework, wherefore some tangible results are beginning to emerge. Progress towards the PROJECT OBJECTIVE is rated between MS and S.    With regard to OUTCOME 1, which focuses on on-the-ground delivery of restoration of forests, rangelands and arable lands, the project has started to engage activities on the ground on forest rehabilitation: direct reforestation has been completed in 114 ha based on the land degradation assessment, with suitable species assemblages identified in the ecological assessment; also 25 km of riparian ecosystems linking two wetlands are being rehabilitated. In contrast, the rehabilitation of range and agricultural lands has not yet started on the ground. Meanwhile, outputs underpinning work in these have been emerging: (i) identification of suitable rangelands species; (ii) installation of the seed propagation unit at the LARI; (iii) nutritional profile optimization; (iv) development of 3 prototype machines for land imprinting to be piloted for applying supplementary seeds from seed banks to accelerate rangeland regeneration (a potentially interesting innovation); and (v) development of a rangeland map for Lebanon based on internationally approved criteria and classification. Work on rangelands and agricultural lands has so far focused on training of MoE/MoA, the development of participatory National Forest and Rangeland (rangelands outside forests) Management Guidelines so these integrate aspects of SLM and their inclusion in legal regulatory mechanisms such as the new Forest and Rangelands law supported by the project, and work on sustainable agri-related businesses and livelihood have been initiated on small ruminants, apiculture, grape molasses, dried fruits, and medicinal and aromatic plants. Progress towards OUTCOME 1 is rated between MS and S, with S the chosen rating even though more concrete and wider-ranging on the ground action could have been expected by mid-term.    With regard to Outcome 2, on the reduction of pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the Qaraoun Catchment, whose indicators after the reframing of the results framework now focus more clearly on land use planning, progress has been ambitious and significant. The project is engaged in highly relevant conversations with the targeted districts and municipalities on the development and implementation of such LUPs, the absence of which is an important gap in Lebanon. A diagnostic report, SEA and Masterplan for the Bekaa Valley (comprising the targeted districts Zahle, West Bekaa, and Rachaya) were developed, together with a local development action and resource mobilization plan. There has been no progress on the newly added indicator on a Land Use Information Management System but this will be tackled in the net reporting period. Progress towards OUTCOME 1 is rated S.    With regard to Outcome 3, on institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement for promoting sustainable forest and land management through an INRM landscape approach, the project team has engaged in active and encouraging advocacy and meetings with MOE and MOA and SLM-relevant Committees, and as stated above is asked to develop improved rangeland and forest management plans and integrate SLM into relevant new regulations/ legislation. In coordination with FAO, the project is mainstreaming SLM in curricula of technical schools managed by the MoA. The project project also coordinates with relevant actors and projects such as MoA, FAO, Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGUP), LARI, AgriCAL, World Bank’s Integrated Pest Management Project, on SLM in agriculture, forests, rangelands and land-use planning to ensure complementarities between existing projects. The projevctc has beging to engage in efforts to clean the Qaraoun Lake and in mobilizing resources for the sustainable management and restoration of ecosystem services of the Litani (upper and lower catchment). It is worthwhile noting that the project has been named the focal point of LDN reporting at the Ministry of Environment. Progress towards OUTCOME 1 is rated S.    The RTA agrees with the project that achievements towards all 3 Outcomes and the Project Objective are generally On Track. The rating sits between MS and S because there are some notions of MS due to delays and still limited on the ground activities (refo could have wider range no work on, agri and rangelands must be started) the chosen DO PROGRESS RATING is SATISFACTORY given the project’s technical rigour, ambition and innovation.    The calculated OVERALL ASSESSMENT rating (SATISFACTORY) was maintained by the RTA. | |

# Gender

**Progress in Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

This information is used in the UNDP-GEF Annual Performance Report, UNDP-GEF Annual Gender Report, reporting to the UNDP Gender Steering and Implementation Committee and for other internal and external communications and learning.  The Project Manager and/or Project Gender Officer should complete this section with support from the UNDP Country Office.

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| --- |
| **Gender Analysis and Action Plan:** *not available* |
| **Please review the project's Gender Analysis and Action Plan. If the document is not attached or an updated Gender Analysis and/or Gender Action Plan is available please upload the document below or send to the Regional Programme Associate to upload in PIMS+. Please note that all projects approved since 1 July 2014 are required to carry out a gender analysis and all projects approved since 1 July 2018 are required to have a gender analysis and action plan.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **Please indicate in which results areas the project is contributing to gender equality (you may select more than one results area, or select not applicable):** |
| Contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources: No |
| Improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance: Yes |
| Targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women: Yes |
| Not applicable: No |

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| **Atlas Gender Marker Rating** |
| **GEN1:** some contribution to gender equality |

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| **Please describe any experiences or linkages (direct or indirect) between project activities and gender-based violence (GBV). This information is for UNDP use only and will not be shared with GEF Secretariat.** |
| N/A |

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| **Please specify results achieved this reporting period that focus on increasing gender equality and the empowerment of women.**    **Please explain how the results reported addressed the different needs of men or women, changed norms, values, and power structures, and/or contributed to transforming or challenging gender inequalities and discrimination.** |
| Gender equality and women empowerment continue to be mainstreamed into project outcomes/outputs through the following:  - Various participatory tools on multiple levels (forest management planning and land use planning and monitoring mainly so far),  - Trainings/capacity building initiatives at the central and local level.  - Beneficiaries of grants for the improvement of livelihoods at the household level.  This has been secured through the design of the initiatives where gender quotas were set to ensure the participation of women (and youth). |

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| **Please describe how work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment enhanced the project's environmental and/or resilience outcomes.** |
| The inclusion of women ultimately contributes to increasing social acceptance and thus, the sustainability of the project activities. The direct impact of their involvement will be more visible in the next phase of the project that will reflect improved livelihoods as a result of income generating activities deployed though the various project grants. |

# Social and Environmental Standards

**Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)**

The Project Manager and/or the project’s Safeguards Officer should complete this section of the PIR with support from the UNDP Country Office. The UNDP-GEF RTA should review to ensure it is complete and accurate.

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| **1) Have any new social and/or environmental risks been identified during project implementation?** |
| No |

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| **If any new social and/or environmental risks have been identified during project implementation please describe the new risk(s) and the response to it.** |
| N/A |

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| **2) Have any existing social and/or environmental risks been escalated during the reporting period? For example, when a low risk increased to moderate, or a moderate risk increased to high.** |
| No |

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| **If any existing social and/or environmental risks have been escalated during implementation please describe the change(s) and the response to it.** |
| N/A |

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| **SESP:** [ANNEX 3-ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SCREENING.docx](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4642/213453/1717051/1723192/ANNEX%20%203-ENVIRONMENTAL%20AND%20SOCIAL%20SCREENING.docx)  **Environmental and Social Management Plan/Framework:** *not available* |
| **For reference, please find below the project's safeguards screening (Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) or the old ESSP tool); management plans (if any); and its SESP categorization above. Please note that the SESP categorization might have been corrected during a centralized review.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **3) Have any required social and environmental assessments and/or management plans been prepared in the reporting period? For example, an updated Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) or Indigenous Peoples Plan.** |
| No |

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| **If yes, please upload the document(s) above. If no, please explain when the required documents will be prepared.** |
| Under project Outcome 2 relating to the prevention of degradation through sustainable land use planning, a participatory approach in the process of the Strategic Environmental Assessment was initiated. The participatory approach was devised in order to limit to the extent possible opposition on the proposed masterplan and zoning aka detailed urban plans considering potential competing uses namely on private properties in the Qaraoun catchment.    In addition to the above, environmental due diligence was undertaken upon the preparation of the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) for reforestation activities for both the riparian sites and forest degraded sites as required. Mitigation measures were proposed and taken into account in the preparation of management plans and rehabilitation activities.    Both SEA and IEE are due mid-September 2019, as the project is waiting for the masterplan validation to finalize the SEA and also for the riparian management plans relevant for the IEE. |

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| **4) Has the project received complaints related to social and/or environmental impacts (actual or potential )?** |
| No |

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| **If yes, please describe the complaint(s) or grievance(s) in detail including the status, significance, who was involved and what action was taken.** |
| N/A |

# Communicating Impact

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| **Tell us the story of the project focusing on how the project has helped to improve people’s lives.**  **(This text will be used for UNDP corporate communications, the UNDP-GEF website, and/or other internal and external knowledge and learning efforts.)** |
| The Qaraoun Catchment  The Qaraoun Catchment lies within the Bekaa Valley and is characterized as Lebanon’s agriculture heartland running between Mount Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon mountain ranges. The catchment spans parts of four districts – Baalbek, Zahle, West Bekaa and Rachaya and feeds Lebanon’s largest and longest river, the Litani, up to where it discharges into the man-made Qaraoun Lake. The Litani River and Qaraoun Lake are considered to be the most important sources of fresh water in Lebanon with 350,000 people in 161 communities being dependent on the surface and groundwater resources of the river basin for drinking water, food production and urban use. Despite its importance, the catchment suffers from accelerating land degradation, which is undermining ecosystem functions and affecting the welfare and livelihoods of rural people who are dependent upon these services. Land degradation is attributable to historic deforestation, excessive firewood collection, overgrazing, expansion of urban settlements, inappropriate infrastructure placement and loss of agricultural fields to competing land uses.  Acknowledging the environmental pressures on the natural resources and effects of land degradation in the Qaraoun catchment, the Government of Lebanon (GoL) partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to implement the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in the Qaraoun Catchment project which is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project is designed in a way to create a paradigm shift from unsustainable to sustainable land management in the Qaraoun catchment. It promotes an integrated approach towards managing land use in forests, rangelands and agricultural ecosystems. More specifically, the project activities aim to (i) rehabilitate degraded areas, (ii) prevent further degradation through land use planning, and (iii) enhance capacity building and policy making at different levels and in different land use types in the project target areas.    Rehabilitating Degraded Ecosystems  As monitoring land degradation is needed for decision makers to reverse degradation and implement land conservation techniques, a land degradation assessment was undertaken to establish evidence-based restoration targets and informed decisions-making on potential interventions (e.g., rehabilitation, prevention, mitigation of land degradation). The assessment also aimed at backing-up efforts to prioritize interventions. A systematic approach for mapping and assessing land degradation was developed and tested at the sub-national level with the combined use of geo-spatial information and field data. While the specific objectives were to (i) assess trends in land degradation and the impact of historical land-uses on the current landscape characters and (ii) investigate and characterize principal criteria of land degradation, ultimately it aimed at identifying site-specific land conservation measures. Multi-source and multi-resolution spatial data were employed using geographic object-based image analysis for assessing losses in vegetation cover, trends in land productivity, and losses in soil organic carbon. Prioritizing lands prone to degradation was investigated using a set of spatial factors of different weights. Field data collection involved the use of pre-defined set of questions for assessing: type, extent, degree, rate and direct and indirect causes of land degradation. Accordingly, tools, practices and measures at site level were rolled out to avoid and reduce the impacts of land degradation in the three different land use types in the catchment including high altitude forest lands, middle level rangelands and arable land on the valley floor in the districts of Zahle, Rachaya and West Bekaa.  In parallel, and to ensure sustainability of such measures, guidelines for improved management and protection of forests and rangelands were developed in close collaboration with concerned stakeholders (Ministry of Agriculture, relevant NGOs, experts, etc.).    Preventing Land Degradation  While reversing land degradation is essential in re-establishing ecosystem services, prevention of further degradation and reduction of pressures on natural resources from competing land uses is critical in maintaining balance. The project has set a target for the development of integrated land use plans and detailed urban plans (DUPs) that take into account land degradation at the landscape and local scale in line with sustainable use of natural resources. In supporting local administrations in their planning and monitoring roles, it is intended to develop a robust decision support system, including a Strategic Environmental Assessment, along with an integrated Land Use Information Management System (LUIMS) for effective monitoring and tracking of trends in the condition of the land and take corrective actions before degradation becomes irreversible.  The planning process will result in a long-term territorial vision linked with the priority productive sectors and available resources. The plans will incorporate aspects of the environment that could present significant constraints or opportunities to the development of the region so as to protect the land from degradation, reduce/avoid impacts on ecosystem services, safeguard biodiversity and enhance livelihoods.    Building Capacity & Policy Making  Institutional strengthening and capacity enhancement among central and local level government authorities as well as at the individual level are key in removing barriers to SLM. The aim is to shift land stewardship mindsets from ‘deplete-abandon-migrate’, to ‘restore-sustain-protect’ in order to reduce pressures on arable lands, forests, and rangelands while ensuring livelihoods of local communities are being met in a sustainable and equitable manner. The project is designed in a way to put forth the tools for participatory planning, management, enforcement in order to achieve wise land use and protection of ecosystem services. A series of trainings are planned at different levels i.e. district, municipal and village levels on various topics related to land use planning, agriculture, forestry, rangeland management, efficient use of water resources and/or animal health care improvement. Additionally, policy and regulatory reforms necessary to resolve gaps or inconsistencies in legislation and necessary to remove barriers to SLM will be integrated into relevant policies, plans and legislation. |

**Knowledge Management, Project Links and Social Media**

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| **Please describe knowledge activities / products as outlined in knowledge management approved at CEO Endorsement /Approval.**    **Please also include: project's website, project page on the UNDP website, blogs, photos stories (e.g. Exposure), Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, as well as hyperlinks to any media coverage of the project, for example, stories written by an outside source. Please upload any supporting files, including photos, videos, stories, and other documents using the 'file lirbary' button in the top right of the PIR.** |
| - Project page on the UNDP website:  http://open.undp.org/#project/00081592  - Launch of Sustainable Land Mgmt in Qaraoun Catchment Proj #SLMQ aiming @ alleviating land degradation&amp;maintaining ecosystem services @theGEF  https://twitter.com/UNDP\_Lebanon/status/803934763753017344  - UNDP – SLMQ page on Facebook:  https://www.facebook.com/UNDPSLMQ/  - Selection of meetings with local authorities:  https://www.facebook.com/pg/jsh.federation/posts/  https://www.facebook.com/jsh.federation/photos/pcb.1134527796688750/1134522886689241/?type=3&theater  https://www.facebook.com/buhairaunion/  https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\_fbid=686926261492004&amp;id=575300349321263  - Field work: Baseline ecological assessment  https://www.facebook.com/elsa.sattout/posts/10158866950640790  - SLMQ Story entitled ‘Protect, restore, reduce – working towards land degradation neutrality in Lebanon’ published in the UNDP-GEF publication ‘Listening to our Land – Stories of Resilience’  https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Environment%20and%20Energy/biodiversity/UNDP%20Listening%20to%20our%20land%20lowres.pdf  - http://www.unesco.org/new/en/cairo/about-this-office/single-view/news/strengthening\_the\_arab\_mab\_network\_readiness\_of\_potential\_b/  - http://www.unesco.org/new/en/cairo/about-this-office/single-view/news/biodiversity\_conservation\_within\_and\_beyond\_unesco\_designat/  - http://www.unesco.org/new/en/cairo/about-this-office/single-view/news/undp\_unesco\_thematic\_workshop\_on\_the\_integrated\_landscape\_ap/  - 6th Mediterranean Forest Week: Land Degradation Assessment and Monitoring: A Combined Use of Earth Observation Data and the World Overview of Conservation. Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) toolbox in the Qaraoun Watershed, Lebanon (Upcoming proceedings publication)  - https://vi-med.forestweek.org/sites/default/files/booklet\_en\_29032019\_spreads.pdf  - Documented good practices that contribute to addressing adverse Desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD)-related migration drivers: the case of the Qaraoun Catchment (upcoming publication based on the UNCCD Conference of the Parties Thirteenth session decision COP(13)/L.25 Ordos, China, 6–16 September 2017)  - Waterlution Lebanon: first Water Innovation Lab in Lebanon (WIL Lebanon) for one week in Bekaa Valley from June 8 - 14, 2019, with the participation of the Embassy of Canada in Lebanon, UNDP, UNESCO, Injaz Lebanon, USAID, CEWAS, Difaf and more) - Press release available upon request  - SLMQ project on rangelands rehabilitation: upcoming short video and social media video. Support pictures available upon request  - Mitri, G., Gebrael, K., Nasrallah, G., Masri, N, and Choueiter, D. 2018. Land degradation mapping and assessment using object-based image analysis. GEOBIA 2018 – From pixels to ecosystems and global sustainability, June 2018, Montpellier, hal-01960323.  http://hal.univ-reunion.fr/hal-01960323 |

# Partnerships

**Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagment**

Please select yes or no whether the project is working with any of the following partners. Please also provide an update on stakeholder engagement. This information is used by the GEF and UNDP for reporting and is therefore very important!  All sections must be completed by the Project Manager and reviewed by the CO and RTA.

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with any Civil Society Organisations and/or NGOs?** |
| Yes |

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| **Does the project work with any Indigenous Peoples?** |
| No |

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| **Does the project work with the Private Sector?** |
| Yes |

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| **Does the project work with the GEF Small Grants Programme?** |
| No |

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| **Does the project work with UN Volunteers?** |
| Yes |

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| **Did the project support South-South Cooperation and/or Triangular Cooperation efforts in the reporting year?** |
| No |

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| **CEO Endorsement Request:** [PIMS 4642 Lebanon Qaroun Watershed - CEO Endorsement Request 26 November 2014.doc](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4642/213453/1667258/1667539/PIMS%204642%20Lebanon%20Qaroun%20Watershed%20-%20CEO%20Endorsement%20Request%2026%20November%202014.doc) |
| **Provide an update on progress, challenges and outcomes related to stakeholder engagement based on the description of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan as documented at CEO endorsement/approval (see document below). If any surveys have been conducted please upload all survey documents to the PIR file library.** |
| The participation of the stakeholders is in accordance with the stakeholder engagement plan prepared during the PPG phase. In addition to the those mentioned, and due to the presence of displaced Syrian refugees, a multitude of the stakeholders have emerged as actors in the humanitarian and relief efforts. This has put extra pressure on the project to map and coordinate relevant actions in the project area, a hotspot in terms of the degradation, competing land uses, and unsustainable use of resources. The project has accordingly worked to accommodate the various stakeholders in all the focus group meetings as well as in workshops. Other forums include the stakeholder consultation meetings organised within the scope of the environmental impact assessment exercises. The project ensures maximum outreach in these meetings to include to the extent possible local community members, particularly women, as well as decision makers. National stakeholders are also engaged officially through the Ministry of Environment to ensure maximum outreach and involvement. |

# Annex - Ratings Definitions

**Development Objective Progress Ratings Definitions**

(HS) Highly Satisfactory: Project is on track to exceed its end-of-project targets, and is likely to achieve transformational change by project closure. The project can be presented as 'outstanding practice'.

(S) Satisfactory: Project is on track to fully achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.

(MS) Moderately Satisfactory: Project is on track to achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure with minor shortcomings only.

(MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is expected to partially achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure with significant shortcomings. Project results might be fully achieved by project closure if adaptive management is undertaken immediately.

(U) Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is not expected to achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. Project results might be partially achieved by project closure if major adaptive management is undertaken immediately.

(HU) Highly Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is not expected to achieve its end-of-project targets without major restructuring.

**Implementation Progress Ratings Definitions**

(HS) Highly Satisfactory: Implementation is exceeding expectations. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and risk management are fully on track. The project is managed extremely efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the project can be presented as 'outstanding practice'.

(S) Satisfactory: Implementation is proceeding as planned. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and risk management are on track. The project is managed efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the project can be presented as 'good practice'.

(MS) Moderately Satisfactory: Implementation is proceeding as planned with minor deviations. Cumulative financial delivery and management of risks are mostly on track, with minor delays. The project is managed well.

(MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory: Implementation is not proceeding as planned and faces significant implementation issues. Implementation progress could be improved if adaptive management is undertaken immediately. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and/or management of critical risks are significantly off track. The project is not fully or well supported.

(U) Unsatisfactory: Implementation is not proceeding as planned and faces major implementation issues and restructuring may be necessary. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and/or management of critical risks are off track with major issues and/or concerns. The project is not fully or well supported.

(HU) Highly Unsatisfactory: Implementation is seriously under performing and major restructuring is required. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones (e.g. start of activities), and management of critical risks are severely off track with severe issues and/or concerns. The project is not effectively or efficiently supported.