

## Community-based Climate-responsive Livelihoods and Forestry (CCLF)

### Part I: Project Information

**GEF ID**  
10312

**Project Type**  
FSP

**Type of Trust Fund**  
LDCF

**CBIT/NGI**  
 CBIT  
 NGI

**Project Title**  
Community-based Climate-responsive Livelihoods and Forestry (CCLF)

**Countries**  
Afghanistan

**Agency(ies)**  
UNDP

**Other Executing Partner(s)**  
NEPA, ANDMA, MRRD, MoEW, MoE, NGOs, and CSOs

**Executing Partner Type**  
Government

**GEF Focal Area**

Climate Change

**Taxonomy**

Focal Areas, Sustainable Development Goals, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Community-Based Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Sustainable Forest, Sustainable Agriculture, Income Generating Activities, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands, Forest, Drylands, Climate Change, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Paris Agreement, Climate Change Adaptation, Community-based adaptation, Disaster risk management, Livelihoods, Climate resilience, Ecosystem-based Adaptation, Least Developed Countries, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Demonstrate innovative approaches, Stakeholders, Local Communities, Private Sector, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Type of Engagement, Information Dissemination, Partnership, Consultation, Participation, Civil Society, Community Based Organization, Communications, Awareness Raising, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender-sensitive indicators, Women groups, Beneficiaries, Gender results areas, Capacity Development, Participation and leadership, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Learning, Theory of change, Adaptive management, Indicators to measure change, Knowledge Generation, Knowledge Exchange

**Rio Markers****Climate Change Mitigation**

Climate Change Mitigation 0

**Climate Change Adaptation**

Climate Change Adaptation 2

**Duration**

60 In Months

**Agency Fee(\$)**

853,330.00

**Submission Date**

7/24/2019

A. Indicative Focal/Non-Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
CCA-1	LDCF	8,749,087.00	19,000,000.00
CCA-2	LDCF	233,333.00	1,000,000.00
	<b>Total Project Cost (\$)</b>	<b>8,982,420.00</b>	<b>20,000,000.00</b>

## B. Indicative Project description summary

### Project Objective

Strengthened resilience of rural communities' livelihoods to climate risks and variability in selected provinces in Afghanistan

Project Component	Financing Type	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	GEF Amount(\$)	Co-Fin Amount(\$)
Component 1: Capacities of national and sub-national governments and communities are strengthened to address climate change impacts.	Technical Assistance	Climate change and gender issues are included in Community Development Plans (CDPs) at local level and supported by subnational level plans	Output 1.1 Gender-sensitive climate change risk and vulnerability assessments introduced; gender responsive risk reduction solutions identified and integrated into community and sub-national climate change adaptation planning and budgeting  Output 1.2 All targeted communities are trained to assess climate risks and vulnerability and to plan and implement autonomous adaptation measures	LDC F	200,000.00	1,000,000.00

Component 2: Restoration of degraded land and climate-resilient livelihood interventions	Investment	Community based land restoration, water management and climate resilient livelihoods solutions adopted	<p>Output 2.1 Scalable approaches for restoration of lands affected by desertification and/ or erosion introduced in pilot areas.</p> <p>Output 2.2 Small-scale rural water infrastructure and new water technologies introduced at community level.</p> <p>Output 2.3 Climate resilient and diverse livelihoods established through introduction of technologies, training of local women and men and assistance in understanding of and access to markets and payment instruments.</p>	LDC F	7,321,353.00	15,000,000.00
Component 3: Natural forests sustainably managed and new forest areas established by reforestation	Investment	Climate-resilient management practices of forests and woodlands implemented in the targeted provinces	<p>Output 3.1 Provincial forest maps and information management system established and maintained</p> <p>Output 3.2 Provincial climate-smart forest management plans developed</p> <p>Output 3.3 Community based forestry established and contributing to climate change resilient forest management</p>	LDC F	800,000.00	4,000,000.00

Component 4: Knowledge management and M&E	Technical Assistance	Improved knowledge and adaptive management to inform planning and implementation of community-based interventions	Output 4.1 A local level participatory M&E System for monitoring of community-based interventions on the ground designed.  Output 4.2. Improved adaptive management through enhanced information and knowledge sharing and effective M&E System	LDC F	233,333.00	
				<b>Sub Total (\$)</b>	<b>8,554,686.00</b>	<b>20,000,000.00</b>
<b>Project Management Cost (PMC)</b>						
				LDCF	427,734.00	
				<b>Sub Total(\$)</b>	<b>427,734.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
				<b>Total Project Cost(\$)</b>	<b>8,982,420.00</b>	<b>20,000,000.00</b>

### C. Indicative sources of Co-financing for the Project by name and by type

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
GEF Agency	UNDP	Grant	Investment mobilized	1,000,000.00
Recipient Country Government	MAIL	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	14,000,000.00
Donor Agency	ADB	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	5,000,000.00
			<b>Total Project Cost(\$)</b>	<b>20,000,000.00</b>

#### Describe how any "Investment Mobilized" was identified

As, part of its mandate, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) is implementing forest management projects under the Natural Resource Management (NRM) Department. One such project is the MAIL-UNDP Community-Based Agricultural and Rural Development-All (CBARD-ALL) project - a community-based initiative which introduces and strengthens local production and marketing of traditional high-value crops in different communities in the major opium producing provinces of Farah, Badghis and Nangarhar. The project's objective is to prove the viability of high-value agricultural-based interventions in improving local economies in targeted provinces as a sustainable alternative to illicit crop cultivation. Funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), the CBARD-ALL project will provide in-kind co-finance in the area of Agriculture Livelihoods and Forest Management worth \$10,000,000 without operational cost. The total funding of the project is 30 million and will end in December 2024. The Asian Development Bank, Afghanistan (ADB) will provide in kind co-finance of \$5,000,000 (without operational cost) through various projects being implemented in relevant target areas in Afghanistan.

D. Indicative Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)
UNDP	LDCF	Afghanistan	Climate Change	NA	8,982,420	853,330	9,835,750.00
<b>Total GEF Resources(\$)</b>					<b>8,982,420.00</b>	<b>853,330.00</b>	<b>9,835,750.00</b>



E. Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

PPG Required



PPG Amount (\$)

150,000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

14,250

Agency	Trust Fund	Country	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Amount(\$)	Fee(\$)	Total(\$)	
UNDP	LDCF	Afghanistan	Climate Change	NA	150,000	14,250	<b>164,250.00</b>	
					<b>Total Project Costs(\$)</b>	<b>150,000.00</b>	<b>14,250.00</b>	<b>164,250.00</b>

## Core Indicators

### Indicator 3 Area of land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

### Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

### Indicator 3.2 Area of Forest and Forest Land restored

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

**Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and shrublands restored**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

**Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (incl. estuaries, mangroves) restored**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

**Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

**Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes that meets national or international third party certification that incorporates biodiversity considerations (hectares)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
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**Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) loss avoided**

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

**Documents (Please upload document(s) that justifies the HCVF)**

Title	Submitted
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## Part II. Project Justification

### 1a. Project Description

#### 1A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

##### **Adaptation problems, root causes and barriers:**

Afghanistan is a war-torn country, which has been in almost continuous conflict for three decades. The ongoing conflict has resulted in loss of life, destruction and widespread socioeconomic distress. These extreme conditions have made it extremely difficult for households to secure even the most basic services. Finding facilities such as health care and education or livelihood opportunities such as part time employment is often challenging. This is especially true for the most deprived and those living outside larger urban centers.

Around 71% of Afghans live in rural areas, with nearly 90% of this population generating the majority of their household income from agriculture related activities. These rural residents rely heavily on agricultural lands to meet their daily needs. In addition to crop and livestock supported livelihoods, many households are additionally dependent on other ecosystem goods and services that typically come in the form of water, wild food, wood, firewood, and medicinal plants. These naturally occurring, and freely accessible products provide communities with an important lifeline, especially in the absence of public support services and social safety nets. Their availability is challenged by unsustainable use practices and growing demand related to the rapid population growths. Continued supply of such goods and services becomes even more critical during times of economic shocks - especially for the poor and marginalized who have few liquid assets e.g. cattle and money. Recent remote sensing data (published in 2015 but based on 2010 satellite imagery) shows that Afghanistan (total land area of 65 million ha) has 9.61 million ha of arable land out of which 5.5 million ha has irrigation potential, but only 2.4 million ha has irrigation facilities at various level (Source: Draft National Irrigation Program 2016). Most Afghans are, therefore, highly susceptible to any situation that may negatively impact agricultural lands, alpine/montane forests and rangelands.

***Afghanistan's Changing Climate:*** Climate change scenarios for Afghanistan (Landell Mills, 2016)[1] suggest temperature increases of 1.4-4.0°C by the 2060s (from 1970-1999 averages), and a corresponding decrease in rainfall and more irregular precipitation patterns. These anticipated temperature and precipitation changes will alter the timing, predictability, and quantity of water reaching cultivable lands as a result of (1) faster mountain snow/ice melt (2) reduced river flow and (3) irregular and reduced rainfall patterns. According to the NAPA-Afghanistan, the worsening climatic conditions in Afghanistan will continue to impact negatively upon socio-economic development, creating multiple impacts for given sectors. Sectors such as agriculture and water resources are likely to be severely impacted by changes in climate.

Snow and ice that accumulate on mountains are a major source of water in Afghanistan. As these frozen bodies of water melt in summer months, they provide a steady flow of meltwater to rivers and groundwater aquifers. However, increase of temperature and consequent warmer winters have begun to accelerate this natural melting cycle. Elevated temperatures are causing earlier than normal seasonal melt, resulting in an increased flow of water to river basins before it is needed. The temperature change is also reducing the water holding capacity of frozen reservoirs. Furthermore, higher rates of evaporation and evapotranspiration are not allowing the already scant rainfall to fully compensate the water cycle. This has further exacerbated water scarcity.

Seasonal precipitation patterns are also changing, with drier conditions predicted for most of Afghanistan. The southern provinces will be especially affected (Savage et al. 2009). Timing of the rainfall is also causing a problem. Rainfall events starting earlier than normal in the winter season are causing faster snowmelt and reduced snowfall. Together, these factors reduce the amount of accumulated snow and ice lying on the mountains. Furthermore, shorter bursts of intensified rainfall have increased incidence of flooding with overflowing riverbanks and sheet flow damaging crops and the overall resilience of agricultural sector. On the other end of the spectrum, Afghanistan is also likely to experience worsening droughts. These climate related challenges have and will continue to impact precipitation, water storage and flow.

### *Climate change induced poverty in Afghanistan:*

Although adequate data and analytical reports on specific impact of climate change on poverty in Afghanistan is unavailable, multiple symptoms of climate change impact on livelihoods are quite prominently visible. Climate change in the forms of frequent and prolonged drought, erratic precipitation (such as snowfall and rainfall), and inconsistent temperature regime directly affects the life and livelihood of Afghan people and poorer segments of the society has become more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Four major affected sectors are described below:

**Agriculture:** Evidences are already visible that the vulnerability of the agriculture sector to increased temperatures and changes in rainfall/snowfall patterns and snow melt is high. Increased soil evaporation (resulting moisture stress), reduced river flow and less frequent rain during peak cultivation seasons are already affecting agricultural productivity and crop choice options. Crop failure level due to water shortages is increasing. Furthermore, an amount of potentially productive land will be left uncultivated because of water shortage. More water intensive staple crops will become less remunerative to farmers, with a likely increase in the attractiveness of those that are more drought hardy, including opium poppy. If proper adaptation measures and water management interventions are not pursued, the agriculture sector will suffer immensely, and it is the poor agriculture dependent population that will be the worst victim in terms of their food security, livelihood strategy and overall economic conditions. The existing irrigation systems in Afghanistan are operating at a low efficiency level of about 25 percent, which indicates that there is considerable scope for reducing wastage of water. Much of Afghanistan's irrigated land does not receive sufficient water to ensure cropping for all seasons and the National Irrigation Program (2016) indicates that even in wet years one third of the 3.1 million hectares of pre-war irrigated land lies fallow. Significant donor funded investment has gone into rehabilitating damaged or degraded irrigation systems, but little has been done in terms of making new investments in the structures needed to increase efficiency in water use and climate change resilience.

**Socio-Economic Development in Rural Areas:** The poor are the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change in Afghanistan. Climate change is likely to compound existing chronic and acute food security issues. Around 10.6 million people, or close to half of the country's rural population, live in food insecure situations with many not having access to land for even subsistence farming purposes. Over 30% of Afghans don't have enough money to buy food or cover basic needs making them highly susceptible to food price shocks. Effects of this will be more on the people who depend on agriculture for their livelihood and economic activities. More specifically, impact will be acute on women and children, and on those involved in subsistence agriculture or pastoralism. A large proportion of the Afghan population live just above the poverty line and the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (2016-17) shows that rural poverty rate has increased from 35.7% in 2007-08 to 42.3% in 2011-12 to 58.6% in 2016-17. Climatic shocks have the potential to drive a large percentage of population into poverty. Impacts on human health, such as increased prevalence of disease affects the amount of labour productivity and availability for agriculture and other non-farm rural economic activities.

**Water Resources:** Water availability has already been drastically reduced both in terms of surface and ground water. Change in the precipitation pattern along with unsustainable use of water and wetlands is posing a serious threat to ecosystems productivity, food production, and all different utilizations aspects including domestic use. Poor water management interventions reduce adaptive capacity and increase vulnerability and disasters. The cumulative effects of

more frequent and intense droughts on reservoirs and groundwater could threaten the water supply to entire communities specifically in the arid regions of Afghanistan, leading to a range of humanitarian crises, including disease, population displacement and conflict. Rises in winter and spring temperatures will lead to more rapid and earlier snow melt, creating risk of flash flooding. The impact of increasingly frequent flash floods is exacerbated by subsequent droughts. The lack of water availability will increase pressure on Afghanistan and surrounding countries to claim the greatest possible share of regional water sources in the longer term. Water disputes have plagued the central Asian region for years and will likely continue if climate change increases water scarcity in the region. Efforts by Afghanistan to increase its share of water use in the region may have regional implications.

The extreme poverty in rural areas has also led to high levels of displaced people, which in turn have created major challenges in relocating displaced populations. Overcrowding in urban areas has created problems while people are reluctant to consider moving or returning to rural areas where few paying jobs and insufficient land resources are available and agriculture-based livelihoods are increasingly challenged by climate change.

***Climate related impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services:***

The nation's biological resources have been degrading by uncontrolled grazing and increased cultivation, water extraction, poaching and deforestation. Other factors include climate change, land use changes and habitat degradation and fragmentation. These issues are further compounded by the ongoing destruction of forests and rangelands that help maintain watersheds, reduce runoff, minimize erosion and desertification.

Land and water resource degradation has resulted in the reduction of terrestrial carbon sinks, topsoil, stored soil carbon and the ability of vegetation to thrive – which contributes to lower above-ground carbon and a slow gradual reduction in soil health. The ongoing degradation of land and water resources reduces soil water retention and aquifers and the overall regulation of water quality and quantity. Many of these aquifers feed rivers that flow into neighboring countries so any degradation of water resources in Afghanistan will also have regional consequences.

Commercial and subsistence activities are the two main reasons for the degradation of ecosystem goods and services. Droughts, limited regulatory control to protect forests and the reality that people have no other sources of income and no social safety nets, push communities to harvest resources in an unsustainable manner. Lack of sustainable funding has also been a major cause of threats across the natural forest zone in eight provinces in the east and southeast regions, leading the forest to continuously decrease. Climate change is expected to further impact the forest and rangeland ecosystems in the region. Increases in average temperature and reduced precipitation are also highly likely to negatively impact the ecological integrity and functioning of forests.

Afghanistan lacks many of the public private partnerships and protected areas and environmental conservation schemes in comparison with other countries with similar levels of development. This lack of management, or in some cases mismanagement of natural resources, particularly forests, and agricultural interventions have several implications for national and global environmental values.



Afghanistan has relatively little forest cover remaining, with an estimated 1.35 million hectares of forests covering less than 2.8% of the land surface area. The natural forest zone termed “East Afghan Montane Conifer Forests and Baluchistan Xeric Woodlands” has been identified as Vulnerable and Critical Endangered Himalayan Deciduous Forest by the UNEP. Afghanistan’s wetlands rapidly decline because of water shortage due to increasing water abstraction for irrigation needs and climate change impact. The loss of these critical ecosystems further disrupts regulatory and provisioning services that are essential for long term resilience.

### **Adaptation Problems:**

*Problem:* Climate change and its impacts are not well understood amongst most Afghan communities. There is a high level of illiteracy amongst rural people and most do not have access to reliable information sources. There is limited knowledge on climate change trends and how current and future climate change effects will impact on livelihoods at the community level.

*Solution:* The proposed LDCF project will enhance capacities of local communities to understand risks posed by current and future climate change, as well as to plan and implement appropriate measures for adaptation of livelihoods and disaster risk reduction.

*Problem:* Although climate change affects cultivation patterns in Afghanistan there are no standard adaptive cultivation practices for addressing individual stages of crop cultivation for major crops that are affected by climate change.

*Solution:* This LDCF project will propose and demonstrate cultivation practices for major crops that are affected by climate change as well as alternative crops.

*Problem:* The rural communities in the four provinces are affected by and remain vulnerable to the risk of climate change induced droughts – that are becoming more frequent and severe. This has resulted in losses suffered by farmers through reduced crop yields as well as to pastoralists through livestock deaths from insufficient supplies of water, forage on pastures and supplementary fodder. Floods and other extreme weather events cause damages to economic assets as well as homes and community buildings.

*Solution:* Through this LDCF project community members would be trained to construct climate-resilient infrastructure – e.g. stone masonry canal lining, which will transfer water from the source to the agriculture land with minimum water loss. This will provide for more efficient water delivery by preventing water losses during water shortage and protection of irrigation infrastructure from natural disasters – both of which is caused by climate change. Based on these trainings, communities will be supported to construct such infrastructure in vulnerable areas to reduce exposure to climate-induced disasters. In addition, the project will support climate-resilient livelihoods of the most vulnerable communities. Livelihood diversification would be promoted – with specific focus on women and other vulnerable groups. Furthermore, climate-resilient agricultural technologies and techniques will be promoted to address specific climate risks posed to agricultural livelihoods of the targeted communities.

*Root cause:* (1) limited regulatory control of natural resources; (2) lack of established mechanisms for participatory forest management; (3) lack of government capacity to develop climate-resilient management plans and (4) communities lack alternative livelihood options to diversify sources of income.

Given the climate change problems and underlying causes of vulnerabilities outlined above, the country requires inclusion of adaptation measures into development planning at all levels. National and sub-national level government agencies need to include assessments of climate change related risks and vulnerabilities in their planning and address these through suitable actions. Furthermore, local level development planning of CDCs needs to include assessments and address climate change related risks and vulnerabilities. Reducing vulnerabilities of rural livelihoods requires a better understanding and recognition of the limitations of existing and future productivity potentials of natural resources and agricultural lands and consequently a diversification of rural livelihoods in agriculture. The conservation and sustainable use and management of forest resources, both in terms of extractive resource use and non-extractive use of ecosystem services, require proper inventories, management planning and an active, incentive-based involvement of local population in forest use and management.

***Barriers:***

The following barriers to addressing the above described problems have been identified during the development of this proposed LDCF project:

*Barrier 1:* Existing development plans and actions at community level do not sufficiently take into consideration and address impacts of climate change on current and future livelihood needs. This is caused by a lack of specific capacity at national and subnational level to support communities with specific advice on how to assess climate change risk and vulnerabilities and address these at local level planning. Communities and their representative bodies also lack awareness about ongoing and projected climate change and its impact on their particular livelihoods. Also risks and resource limitations, which are not related to climate change, are not always understood at all levels; and subsequently they cannot be addressed. This is connected with an insufficient understanding within the communities of the risks affecting their current and future livelihoods, including gender- and age-specific risks. As a result, climate change-related risks and issues are not sufficiently addressed by area-specific solutions for adaptation and risk mitigation in community as well as sub-national and national planning.

***Addressing Barrier 1:*** Under the proposed LDCF project, capacities of national and sub-national governments and communities will be strengthened to address climate change impacts. This will include gender-sensitive climate change risk and vulnerability assessments; gender responsive risk reduction solutions will be identified and integrated/budgeted into community and sub-national climate change adaptation plans. All targeted communities will be trained to assess climate risks on productive systems and plan and implement a range of adaptation measures for addressing these. (See below description of Component 1)

*Barrier 2:* Limited knowledge of climate-resilient water infrastructure design and climate-related livelihood support (technical capacity barrier): Entities at national and sub-national levels have insufficient institutional and human resource capacities related to water infrastructure design and climate-related livelihoods support. Given that the main adverse impact of climate change in Afghanistan is increased rainfall variability and overall aridity, the inability to master climate-resilient water harvest techniques and manage infrastructure contributes significantly to Afghanistan's vulnerability.

*Barrier 3:* Limited availability and use of information on adaptation options (Information and coordination barrier): At the community level, there are a limited number of adaptation examples to provide demonstrable evidence of the benefits of improving climate resilience. At the same time, there is limited information about alternative livelihood options, rights and entitlements, new agricultural methods, and credit programs that have worked to reduce the vulnerability to climate change.

***Addressing Barriers 2 and 3:*** Under the proposed LDCF project degraded lands will be restored by introducing scalable approaches for restoration of lands affected by climate change driven desertification and/or erosion in the target area. At community level, small-scale climate-resilient rural water infrastructure and new water technologies will be introduced. Climate resilient and diverse livelihoods will be introduced through technologies, training of local women and men and assistance in understanding of and access to markets and financing instruments. These climate change resilient interventions will both lead to immediate institutional and human capacity development and provide potential for further replication of successful interventions (see below description of Component 2).

*Barrier 4:* Limited capacity in the forest department, lack of forest inventories, geo-spatial data and mapping are preventing adequate management of forest ecosystems. The predicted impact of projected climate change on forests and rangelands as well as the adaptation potential of these ecosystems are insufficiently assessed. This causes a lack of climate smart forest management, an unregulated and unsustainable exploitation of forests by local people and outsiders, leading to forest and rangeland degradation, which is accelerated by climate change and therefore limits their ecosystem services for vulnerable local communities.

***Addressing Barrier 4:*** Under the proposed LDCF project provincial forest maps and information management system will be established and maintained. On the basis of this information, provincial climate-smart forest management plans will be developed, and community-based forestry will be established - which will contribute to climate change resilient forest management. As a result, capacity will be developed in forestry agencies and communities and natural forests will be managed sustainably and new forest areas established through reforestation (see below description of Component 3).

#### **Baseline Scenario:**

Rapid population growth, combined with a changing climate and the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan is causing widespread reduction in agricultural productivity, increased poverty and degradation of forests, rangelands and arable lands. The destruction of forests and rangelands is exacerbated by unsustainable extraction of wood to support local and regional fuelwood demands, as well as by increasing livestock numbers and reduced livestock

migration and grazing rotation. The expansion of farmlands into more fertile forest areas and into rangelands has also resulted in further habitat loss and the subsequent loss of ecosystem goods and services. To overcome these problems, several initiatives have been undertaken or are currently being implemented to assist in addressing the root causes and barriers to poverty eradication and loss of habitat.

These projects form a solid basis for the proposed project:

***livelihood Improvement in Tajik – Afghan Cross Border Areas (LITACA)***: This project offers investments for rehabilitating priority infrastructure initiatives and business development as a means of improving livelihoods of the target population and thereby promoting stability and security in the region. The project is based upon the "One Village One Product" (OVOP) concept and aims at mobilizing rural communities for bettering their lives by empowering themselves to establish and run joint businesses. One Village One Product is a known tool for rural development that takes the local and the less known produce or products and transforms them into value-added, widely recognized products. The initiative also emphasizes the use of indigenous natural resources, unique traditional techniques and high quality of products. The livelihoods of more than 1,823,828 people living in target bordering communities will be strengthened (cumulative figure from both countries – 852,128 AFG).

***Climate-induced Disaster Risk Reduction Project (CDRRP)***: This project has used different approaches to help local communities make informed decisions and implementation measures during times of climate related disasters. Climate-resilient livelihood options were also promoted - which included diversification of livelihoods, with a focus on women, youth and marginalized community groups. The capacities of national and sub-national government to integrate climate change issues into national and sub-national planning process were also enhanced.

***Community-based Agriculture and Rural Development- Access to Licit Livelihoods (CBARD-ALL)***: CBARD-ALL is a community-based project which introduces and strengthens local production and marketing of traditional high-value crops in different communities in the major opium producing provinces of Balk, Laghthamn, Paktia, Paktiya, Farah, Badghis and Nangarhar. With a stated purpose to prove the viability of high-value agricultural-based interventions in improving local economies in targeted provinces as a sustainable alternative to illicit crop cultivation. CBARD-ALL aims to reduce opium cultivation and directly benefit an estimated 7,500 households (52,500 beneficiaries). In addition to supporting local farmers with Farmers' Field Schools, CBARD-ALL will build, develop, and/or strengthen existing public and private agro-business infrastructures in the strategic areas of irrigation, transportation, and agricultural facilities. The latter includes the introduction or strengthening of value-add steps through community-owned cooperatives or established SMEs by building or repairing key infrastructure such as greenhouses, dry and cold storage warehouses, and packaging and processing plants. CBARD-ALL is being implemented by UNDP through a partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and in collaboration with Ministry of Counter Narcotics. It is supported locally by District Development Assemblies, Community Development Councils, Non-Government Organizations and the agro-based private sector. The total funding of this project is 30 million and the project will be end in December 2024.

***Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project (CCAP)***: A National Priority Programme (NPP) of the National Unity Government (NUG) that aims to reduce poverty and enhance the living standards of the Afghan people, this project aims to improve delivery of core infrastructure and social services by strengthening national and sub-national planning process and ensuring the involvement of participating communities by forming Community Development Councils (CDCs) to prioritize community needs. The CCAP builds off the successes of the 13-year, commodity development focused, National Solidarity Programme (NSP) and complements the Afghan National Adaptation Program of Action[2] (NAPA) by supporting sub-national capacity development and raising awareness on disaster risk reduction.

**Community-based Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Afghanistan:** This project is currently implemented by FAO. The main objective of the project is to integrate community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and rangeland productivity. Furthermore, the proposed project promotes sustainable management of natural resources through a community-based approach to SLM/SFM in Afghanistan, supporting conservation of the unique biodiversity of the country and enhancing climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration. It also builds capacity on SLM/SFM at the national and local levels to improve planning and coordination by government decision-makers and local communities for managing the country's rangeland and forest ecosystems. The adoption of a community-based approach to implementing SLM/SFM will improve the sustainable use and management of ecosystem goods and services that underpin the livelihoods of local communities. Improved ecosystem management will reduce the risks posed by land degradation, desertification, deforestation and forest degradation. Furthermore, such activities will also increase resilience to climate change. The strengthened enabling environment brought about by the project outputs will inter alia: i) improve the governance of resources at the national and local level; ii) enhance support services and enable participatory, local-level planning; and iii) improve decision making for implementing SLM/SFM interventions. The project objective will be achieved through four interlinked components and their respective outcomes, which are (1) Capacity building at national, sub-national and district levels for SLM/SFM (2) Biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes (3) Community-based rangeland management and (4) Knowledge management and M&E. The duration of the project is 2018 to 2023. The donor is GEF.

**Comparison Sheet between FAO project and proposed UNDP project:**

UNDP/LDCF Project	FAO Project (ID 9285)
<p>Geographic scope - Ghazni, Paktia, Samangan and Kunar</p> <p>Project Objective: In selected provinces, the resilience of local communities to climate change is enhanced and through improved alternative livelihood and land-use options they are better adapted to predicted impacts. The driving objective of the proposed LDCF project is to diversify livelihoods and sources of income as the main adaptation strategy. Water and land management practices are geared towards supporting this objective.</p>	<p>Geographic scope - SLM/SFM in Badghis, Bamyan, Ghazni, Kunar, Paktia.</p> <p>Project Objective: To support integrated, community-based approaches to sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan for promoting biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and rangeland productivity.</p>
<p>Component 1: Capacities of national and sub-national governments and communities are strengthened to address climate change impacts. The project takes a bottom up approach in strengthening knowledge and capacity of local communities in understanding climate risks as well as options to minimize and diversify risk. The proposed capacity building</p>	<p>Component 1. Capacity building at national, sub-national and district levels for SLM/SFM. The project focuses primarily on sustainable land and forest management from conservation and carbon sequestration perspective.</p>

<p>imize and efficiency. The proposed capacity building strategy has a strong gender dimension and links up with the local planning and budgeting process to ensure continuous adaptation at local level. Scope of adaptation includes integrated approaches towards land and water management to support livelihood diversification.</p>	
<p><b>Output 1.1.</b> Strengthen national and subnational governments' capacity to assist communities in integrating climate change adaptation planning into their overall planning and development process</p>	<p><b>Output 1.1.</b> Capacity-building and training programme developed for improving knowledge and awareness on SLM/SFM at national, provincial and district level, including mainstreaming of SLM/SFM into national and sub-national planning and budgeting processes across all sectors.</p>
<p><b>Output 1.2</b> Strengthen the capacity of vulnerable communities to understand the impact of Climate Change and plan and implement own adaptation measures.</p>	<p><b>Output 1.2.</b> Training provided to national and sub-national government officials on land degradation assessment and planning for integrated SLM/SFM, including mainstreaming of SLM/SFM into sectoral planning and budgeting processes at the national, provincial and district levels.</p>
<p><b>Output 1.3</b> Complete gender-sensitive climate change risk assessments, develop risk mitigation solutions and integrate them into national, sub-national and community climate planning activities.</p>	<p><b>Output 1.3.</b> Fine-scale, GIS-based inventory of forest and rangeland resources – including ecosystem goods/services, rangeland/forest condition and socio-ecological resilience – undertaken for Nuristan, Kunar, Badghis, Uruzgan, Ghazni and Bamyān provinces.</p>
	<p><b>Output 1.4.</b> National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap – including provisions for a national MRV system – formulated.</p>
<p><b>Component 2:</b> Sustainable climate-resilient livelihood interventions promoted</p>	<p><b>Component 2:</b> Biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes.</p>
<p><b>Output 2.1</b> Pilot options for reclaiming land back from desertification</p>	<p><b>Output 2.1.</b> Resource materials on local-level planning, implementation and M&amp;E for SLM/SFM developed, based on the LADA-WOCAT and other relevant tools.</p>
<p><b>Output 2.2</b> Construct small-scale rural water infrastructure and introduce new water technologies</p>	<p><b>Output 2.2.</b> Training provided to Natural Resource Management officers on facilitation of participatory, community-based planning and M&amp;E for SLM/SFM as well as best practices for animal husbandry, rangeland management, forest conservation, sustainable resource use and other aspects of SLM/SFM.</p>

	SLM/SFM.
<b>Output 2.3</b> Promote the adoption of rehabilitation approaches for erosion affected lands by combining physical and vegetative measures	<b>Output 2.3.</b> Awareness-raising campaign conducted on community-based SLM/SFM planning, implementation and M&E.
<b>Output 2.4</b> Promote and establish climate proofed alternative livelihood options	<b>Output 2.4.</b> Community Development Committees, Forest Management Committees and Rangeland Social Associations strengthened for community-based decision-making on SLM/SFM and benefit-sharing.
<b>Output 2.5</b> Establish new markets and payment instruments for agricultural and non-agricultural products and services	<b>Output 2.5.</b> Community-based SLM/SFM plans developed for targeted communities in through a participatory approach.
<b>Component 3:</b> Natural forests sustainably managed and new forest areas established by reforestation	<b>Component 3:</b> Biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in forest landscapes.
<b>Output 3.1</b> Provincial forest management plans developed	<b>Output 3.1</b> Biodiversity assessments undertaken in HCVS.
<b>Output 3.2</b> Provincial forest maps and information management system established and maintained	<b>Output 3.2.</b> Community nurseries and woodlots established to support assisted natural regeneration and provide sustainable timber and non-timber forest products to reduce pressure on forest resources in 10,000 ha of High Conservation-Value Forests and 20,000 ha of other forest types.
<b>Output 3.3</b> Community based forestry established	<b>Output 3.3.</b> Assisted natural regeneration, rehabilitation/restoration and sustainable forest management implemented over 10,000 ha of High Conservation-Value Forests and 20,000 ha of other forest types leading to overall increase in vegetative cover over the landscape and improved connectivity between forest patches
<b>Component 4:</b> Knowledge Management and M&E	<b>Component 4:</b> Knowledge Management and M&E
<b>Output 4.1</b> A local level participatory M&E System for monitoring of community-based interventions on the ground designed.	<b>Output 4.1:</b> A national resource centre for SLM/SFM established.
<b>Output 4.2.</b> Improved adaptive management through enhanced information and knowledge sharing and effective M&E System	<b>Output 4.2:</b> A local-level, participatory M&E system for monitoring of SLM/SFM designed.

	<b>Output 4.3:</b> . Participatory M&E of rangeland and forest condition – including biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration – undertaken.
	<b>Output 4.4:</b> Best-practice guidelines on rangeland and forest restoration and management developed and disseminated.
	<b>Output 4.5:</b> Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices in Nuristan, Kunar, Badghis, Uruzgan, Ghazni and Bamyan provinces collated and disseminated nationwide.
	<b>Output 4.6:</b> Mid-term review and terminal evaluation conducted.

ie Natural Resources Management (NRM) department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) has developed National Natural Resource Management Strategy (2017-2021) to focus on supporting sustainable economic development of Afghan communities which depend on natural resources, create green environment, conserve soil, water, and biodiversity. The NRM strategy also recognizes climate change as a serious threat to natural resources and its effect on agriculture and livelihoods on the Afghan communities and points the need for addressing adverse effects of climate change through awareness-raising and assisting local communities adapt to climate change. Therefore, NRM is implementing several forest management projects which focus on community-based forest management that includes conservation, restoration, reforestation, afforestation, sustainable utilization, and local-based value addition and watersheds improvement for resilient, climate-adapted and sustainable economy of rural and pre-urban communities. Some of these are as follows:

**Desertification Control and Greenery.** This MAIL NRM project is planned for implementation all over Afghanistan, with an unconfirmed timeline. The objective is to improve rangeland management within the target provinces through the provision of five project interventions, namely: 1) establishing livestock production centers, 2) providing water, 3) planting for rangeland restoration 4) establishing windbreaks for sand dunes and 5) planting and promoting medicinal plants. It is estimated that \$2 million will be available as co-financing. This will include in-kind contributions such as staff time as well as grant co-financing in the form of on-the-ground investments into forest restoration. The final availability of co-financing will be determined during the PPG phase, following confirmation of government budget and programmes for 2020-2025

**Forest Restoration and Protection.** This MAIL NRM initiative focusses on improved conservation and management of forest ecosystems across more than 20 provinces in Afghanistan. Since 2006, MAIL has - reforested 7,200 ha of pistachio and pine forests; protected 37,235 ha of pistachio and pine forests; conserved a further 4,200 ha of degraded forests; constructed 56 forest check-posts to monitor rates of forest resource use; established 420 Forestry Management Associations (FMAs); provided training to these FMAs on forest restoration and protection; established 100 ha of woodlots using fast-growing tree species; developed 58 income generation projects to create alternative sources of income, thereby reducing pressure on 30,000 ha of forests and conducted public awareness raising on forest protection and forestry laws, including public awareness workshops in over 22 provinces. It is estimated



that ~\$2 million will be available as co-financing. This will include in-kind contributions such as staff time as well grant co-financing in the form of on-the-ground investments into forest restoration. The final availability of co-financing will be determined during the PPG phase, following confirmation of government budget and programmes for 2020-2025

**Community-based Agriculture and Rural Development Access to Licit Livelihoods (CBARD-ALL) ):** The CBARD-ALL project is funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), which introduces and strengthens local production and marketing of traditional high-value crops in different communities in Afghanistan’s major opium-producing provinces of Farah, Balkh, Kandahar, Laghman, Badghis and Nangarhar. This project will start in January 2021 and is planned to end in December 2024, with a total budget of US\$ 30,000,000. From this project \$10 million will be available as co-financing for this LDCF project. The 10 million co-finance is only for the livelihoods component (without operational cost)

**Building resilience of communities living around the Northern Pistachio Belt and Eastern Forest Complex of Afghanistan through an Ecosystem-based Adaptation approach.** This project is currently implemented by UNEP. The project aims to increase the resilience of communities living in the Northern Pistachio Belt (NPB) and Eastern Forest Complex (EFC) through an ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approach. The project has the following interventions: i) strengthening institutional and technical capacity in Afghanistan to implement EbA; ii) restoring degraded forest ecosystems to improve watershed functioning and generate goods and services underpinning livelihoods, thereby increasing the climate resilience of communities; and iii) upscaling and increasing knowledge of the EbA approach to restoring watershed functioning and building climate resilience. The project will implement activities in forest ecosystems in two of Afghanistan’s provinces that are particularly susceptible to climate change, namely Takhar and Nangarhar Provinces

The ADB **Afghanistan Rural Business Support Project** (18 million USD grant) funded by the Government of Japan under the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, has been supporting rural business development in northern provinces of Balkh, Bamyan and Nangarhar. This project focuses on livelihoods activities such as helping farmers, agricultural product processors and traders to more profitably produce, process and market their products. The project also offered business development services in the field, to help farmers and cooperatives in selected provinces to learn how to better market their products to improve profitability. As one of its most influential activities, the project built 1,100 cold storage rooms to help farmers store potatoes for longer periods and profit from seasonally fluctuating market prices. From this project \$5 million will be available as co-financing for this LDCF project.

breakdown of the Co-finance

S/N	Project description	Organization Name	Co-finance Amount (\$)
1	<i>Desertification Control and Greenery</i>	MAIL	2 million
2	<i>Forest Restoration and Protection</i>	MAIL	2 million
3	<i>Community-based Agriculture and Rural Development Access to Licit Livelihoods (CBARD-ALL)</i>	MAIL-UNDP	10 million
4	<i>Afghanistan Rural Business Support Project</i>	ADB	5 million
5	<i>UNDP Cash Co-Finance</i>	UNDP	1 million
<b>Total Co-finance</b>			20 million

Overall, ADB has an ongoing portfolio of more than \$800 million in both Natural Resource Management (NRM) and Agriculture sector, that focuses on - canal rehabilitation and upgradation, along with secondary, tertiary canals and on-farm water management; investment on flood management both through infrastructure establishment as well as capacity building; establishment of watershed management - ongoing and planned packages through community contracting on check dams construction along with non-engineering activities such as reforestation/revegetation, and soil erosion control and degradation; investment on water storage capacity, including further increase of bigger dam raise, downstream irrigation rehabilitation; construction of about small and medium size check dams in 9 provinces of Panjshir area; climate-resilient livestock sector development and second community driven irrigation management (CDIM), which includes both watershed management and Karizes revitalization components; horticulture sector development projects such as greenhouses, cold storage, processing centers, pond construction, drip irrigation, and high value orchard formation in 11 provinces of Afghanistan.

The proposed LDCF project will benefit through lesson learned from the above projects and will complement by addressing remaining adaptation deficits in the target communities. MAIL will collaborate and coordinate with FAO especially on land and forest management matters to ensure consolidated efforts for greater impact and will ensure that no duplication happens on the ground. This LDCF project will be critical in taking localized approach to adaptation and introduce a range of required adaptation solutions that includes water technologies, such as water storage and irrigation, integrated land and water management solutions through the land restorative work geared towards long term drought management as well as livelihood diversification. This is a complementary strategy in relation to some of the key programmes at the baseline (by UNEP and FAO) that largely focus on ecosystem-based approaches to land and forest management. The main gaps in implementation of GEF supported projects in Afghanistan are lack of capacity, especially at local level as well as insufficient ownership and involvement of Community Development Councils in decision making that is essential to instigate change. The proposed project specifically targets to address these capacity deficiencies, and supports local engagement and empowerment.

The proposed LDCF project under the climate resilience livelihoods component will build on ADB activities described above and will consider lessons from ADB projects during PPG phase, and implementation of this proposed project. In particular, the proposed project will draw on best practices in terms of community-based approaches to planning and implementation of natural resource management. Moreover, the capacity-building initiatives under ADB will build awareness and capacities within MAIL and NEPA – and will enhance the design and implementation of this proposed LDCF project. Furthermore, lessons learned from the design and implementation of similar community-based forestry plans under ADB support will be used to inform the development of community-based forest plans during implementation of this proposed LDCF project. The proposed LDCF project will expand the geographic, thematic and ecosystem scope of work of the ADB projects. In consultation with ADB technical team and considering their experiences and gap analyses, the proposed project will build capacity of community members to construct climate-resilient infrastructure – e.g. small-scale rural infrastructure that provide protection from climate change impacts. After this training, communities will be supported to construct such infrastructure in vulnerable areas to reduce exposure to climate-induced disasters. During the PPG phase, lessons from ADB projects will be considered to design livelihoods diversification interventions with a specific focus on women and other vulnerable population groups – to support production of high-value products for alternative income generation. Furthermore, climate-resilient agricultural technologies and techniques will be designed to address specific climate risks posed to agricultural livelihoods of the targeted communities.

The MAIL is mandated to support natural resource and irrigation management but suffers from various constraints that are preventing the implementation of interventions to combat land degradation, water losses for farming and desertification in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. These constraints include among others the absence of climate change integration into planning practices and inadequate local and provincial mechanisms to support the NRM strategy (2017-21) and decision-making on sustainable forest and rangeland management in alignment with Afghanistan's national priorities commitments under international conventions. Associated to these are inadequate financial resources to implement sustainable practices, limited capacity to provide

extension services to local communities, and limited knowledge of best practices for forest conservation, rangeland restoration and water management. Local communities that depend on natural resources (rangeland, forest, biodiversity) for their livelihoods are unable to implement measures to prevent land and forest degradation taking into account the impact of climate change.

As a result of the above-mentioned factors, natural resources will continue to be managed to derive maximum benefit in the short-term. The fast rate of land and forest degradation in Afghanistan is directly attributable to this short-term view of resource use. Without inclusion of longer-term objectives and integration of climate change into the planning horizon for rural development the rangelands and forests will continue to suffer from overexploitation. Consequently, rangelands and forests in Afghanistan are expected to continue to degrade with negative impacts on community livelihoods, biodiversity and greenhouse gas emissions.

Without the proposed project the necessary adaptation measures in rural development and forest management will not be adopted and the impact of climate change on local population and their environment will be devastating and with time far more costly to address.

***Baseline for Component 1:***

Climate change is a relatively poorly understood concept in Afghanistan, particularly at the local level in rural, vulnerable communities. Current development planning at community levels does not take into consideration climate change. The MRRD and MAIL support the CDCs in their planning, but it has neither at national nor at provincial level the technical capacity to provide targeted assistance to communities, how to address climate change impact through effective adaptation in their development plans. While there is considerable awareness of the impacts of natural disasters – including both climate-induced and non-climate disasters – there is limited knowledge on climate change trends and how current and future climate change effects will impact on community-level DRM activities. Communities feel the impact of ongoing climate change but are not aware of the predicted impacts of future projected climate change. They are not aware of the extent to which current and new agricultural and land-use practices are prone to climate change impacts, how they aggravate the impact or how they can be applied to reduce the impact. As a result, ongoing development at community level is at risk of leading to interventions that are not climate-resilient, but rather lead to maladaptation. At present, there are few ongoing projects/programs that focus on building the capacity of local-level stakeholders – including CDC members and district-level government officials – on monitoring climatic changes as well as on integrating climate change risks and opportunities into local-level planning and decision-making processes. The CCAP, which aims at strengthening the national and subnational planning process and ensuring the involvement of participating communities through CDCs does not yet fully consider climate change related risks and adaptation options and projects specifically addressing these issues. Past and ongoing projects aiming at capacity development at national and subnational levels in MRRD and MAIL have not yet specifically addressed the capacity of these levels to assist the communities in integrating climate change resilience as key topic in their local planning. Without the LDCF intervention, planning and decision-making on management of climate-induced disaster risks would remain inadequate for reducing vulnerability of local communities. Local authorities and CDCs would remain unaware of the need to undertake monitoring, tracking and analysis of weather data to inform planning and decision-making on DRM. Moreover, there would be inadequate mapping of climate-induced hazards and the resultant vulnerabilities of local communities. Vulnerable communities would thus remain at risk to climate-induced disasters such as floods and droughts, as they will remain incapacitated to plan and implement appropriate disaster risk reduction measures.

***Baseline for Component 2:***

Livelihoods interventions in rural areas of Afghanistan mainly aim at the immediate improvement of infrastructure, delivery of water and electricity and/or the improvement of income opportunities through increase in agricultural production and other productive activities. These interventions have a short-term focus and do not specifically refer to mid-term impact of ongoing and projected climate change.

The lives and livelihoods of rural communities in the targeted provinces of Samangan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktia remain at risk to the impacts of climate change, including both rapid-onset disasters (such as floods) and slow-onset disasters (such as droughts). Without LDCF intervention, these rural communities will remain vulnerable to such impacts of climate change. Droughts would result in losses suffered by farmers through reduced crop yields as well as to pastoralists through livestock deaths from insufficient supplies of water, and fodder. Floods and other extreme weather events would cause damages to economic assets as well as homes and community buildings. In many cases, loss of life would result from such extreme weather events. In the absence of this project, many members of vulnerable communities would remain unable to adapt their livelihoods to the impacts of climate change, e.g. through adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices and/or alternative livelihood options. In addition, communities would not have the skills nor the access to resources to construct climate-resilient infrastructure to protect their lives and livelihoods from the impacts of climate-induced disaster events.

***Baseline for Component 3:***

The MAIL Department in charge of forestry and the provincial forestry departments in the target provinces of this LDCF project – Ghazni, Kunar, Paktia and Samangan so far have no provincial forest management plan development, establishment of forest maps and information management systems that are climate risk informed. The potential of sustainable use of forest products and delivery of ecosystem services under the conditions of climate change remains insufficiently understood. Forest management is limited to formal top-down decisions without much enforcement and implementation on the ground. Local people have neither technical knowledge nor formal authority to manage and use forests on the lands surrounding their communities. They are therefore neither capable nor incentivized to manage forest sustainably and prevent extractive use causing their degradation and deforestation. Without the proposed project, forest degradation and deforestation will continue and the multiple potentials of the forests and their contribution to climate change adaptation and to rural climate change resilient livelihoods would get lost.

***Baseline for Component 4:***

There are several development projects supporting community-based livelihoods and natural resources management interventions on the ground in Afghanistan including GEF-UNDP supported projects such as CDRRP and Non-GEF UNDP supported project such as CBARD and LITACA. Some of these interventions have proven useful and therefore upscaled or replicated. However, there is no proper system of monitoring and documentation of best practices and lessons learned, resulting in some of these good practices being lost after the project. Most initiatives have applied a top-down approach in knowledge and information management, where government officials/project personnel gather information on field interventions and disseminate it as best practices based on their own monitoring system. Therefore, there is a need to engage community members in a participatory M&E system for monitoring community-based interventions on the ground – so as to ensure that knowledge generated through the project remains with the communities, which they can in turn share with other communities or use it for planning and developing future development interventions. The farmer field school concept is a popular and practical approach that is widely used in the country for sharing knowledge and information at farm level through exchange visits and practical demonstration. This project will use a similar approach in implementing livelihoods and forestry-related interventions under component 2 and 3.

The GEF-supported Climate Change Adaptation project completed in December 2019 and the on-going “Climate-induced Disaster Risk Reduction project (CDRRP)” projects has developed a tracking system to monitor the capacity development component (training awareness raising events, hazard mapping) as well as climate resilient livelihoods and infrastructure projects. This project will take a similar approach and adapt the tracking system to make it more inclusive and engage communities in tracking and monitoring field interventions for adaptive management and guide development planning and implementation for future.

**Proposed alternative scenario:**

The proposed LDCF project will build on the foundations provided by the CCAP and the other projects to help Afghanistan to meet evolving environmental and poverty challenges. The proposed interventions will substantially contribute to the achievement of strategic aims from the country’s national strategy and policy programs in addressing climate change impact in Afghanistan. The proposed project will address the following NAPA priorities:

**Agriculture and Food Security**

- Agricultural Research (Output 2.1)

**Sustainable Irrigation & Water Resource Management**

- Sustainable Irrigation Management (Output 3.1) and
- Water Resource Management (Output 3.1)

**Disaster Risk Management**

- Disaster Preparedness (Output 2.2 and 3.2)

**Sustainable Infrastructure**

- Agriculture Value Chains (Output 2.4 and 2.5)

Under the proposed alternative scenario, the project will work with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and rural communities through their Community Development Councils (CDC) across four provinces to design and implement several climate change related interventions. Four provinces have been selected: Ghazni, Samangan, Kunar and Paktia. The selection of provinces was made in consultation with key stakeholders, in particular in close consultation with the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) and Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and is based on three criteria: 1) the presence of ongoing or planned baseline activities such as forestry, 2) vulnerability to climate-induced disasters such as flood and drought, 3) most vulnerable populations and areas that have not received significant development assistance, and 4) geographic representation of each major region in the country. Samangan and Ghazni provinces are generally considered prone to climate-induced disaster such as flood while there are forests in Kunar and Paktia provinces. For more information please see below Afghanistan Forestry Map.



and illegal exploitation of forests. This, together with associated forest conservation and woodland restoration practices (reduced pressure on forest resources, forestation and reforestation) will result in healthier forest cover that will play a crucial role in enhancing carbon sequestration potential of the currently degraded forests. Well-managed forest and woodland ecosystems will provide climate change adaptation benefits (Ecosystem-based Adaptation) and contribute to the well-being of the communities, better regulatory (e.g., recharge of underground water, reduced risks of floods, mudflows and landslides) and provisioning ecosystem services (sustainable use of forest products). The benefits will be of special importance for Downstream located villages and towns will as well benefit by more stable water supply and are better protected from devastating floods. This will further contribute to the implementation of government's policies and plans such as the NAPA and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (CCSA) that emphasize the role of forests in addressing climate change impacts in Afghanistan.

### **Component 1: Capacities of national and sub-national governments and communities are strengthened to address climate change impacts.**

The project will carry out training and short-term national courses with the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and the National Environment Protection Agency (NEPA) on community participation in climate change risk and vulnerability assessment and participatory planning of adaptation action for increasing local resilience. Capacity development activities will be implemented to train government officials on mainstreaming climate change into the local planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring processes at community and district levels. This will maintain and further develop the capacity of national and subnational governments to assist communities in the assessment of climate change impact and the planning, budgeting and implementation of adaptation measures. These efforts will be coordinated with MAIL and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in connection with the Sustainable Land Management and Sustainable Forest Management project, the National Comprehensive Agricultural Development Priority Programme (2016-20) and the National Natural Resource Management Strategy (2017 – 2021). Guidelines on participatory community level assessment and planning for adaptation and resilience will be prepared, which can be used by provincial departments to guide their work at local level. Operational processes will be prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy including planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation processes.

Training will be provided to local communities, CDCs and district-level MAIL and MRRD staff on monitoring, tracking and analyzing weather data and hazard mapping to inform DRR measures and livelihood practices. This will be complemented by training on systematic gathering of gender and age-disaggregated data prior to planning and implementation of climate change adaptation measures, as well as through gender-sensitive hazard and risk mapping and vulnerability assessments in the targeted communities. These activities will ensure that local-level planning is undertaken with full understanding of the risks posed by climate change and climate-induced disasters for different social and economic groups (e.g. people engaged in crop farming, producers of fruits and nuts in plantations, *kuchi* nomads), as well as the specific vulnerabilities of men, women, the youth, and of the elderly, widows and orphans, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups to current and future impacts of climate change.

***Outcome:** Climate change and gender issues are included in Community Development Plans (CDPs) at local level and supported by subnational and national level.*

**Output 1.1:** Gender-sensitive climate change risk and vulnerability assessments introduced; gender responsive risk reduction solutions identified and integrated into community and sub-national climate change adaptation planning and budgeting; Under this output, capacity of the government institutions will be improved for integrating assessments of climate change risks and vulnerabilities and adaptation planning into sub-national and local planning and

decision-making processes. Provincial Climate Action Plans and Community Development Plans will be revised to fully integrate response measures to climate risks. All assessments will consider gender-specific impact of climate change and all adaptation planning will address this impact accordingly.

Firstly, training will be provided on the integration of climate change adaptation and DRM considerations into provincial and community-level planning processes for MAIL, MRRD and ANDMA as well as inclusion in planning for CDCs and PDCs. Following this, Provincial Climate Action Plans will be formulated for the targeted provinces.

The Provincial Climate Action Plans will outline climate-resilient development opportunities within key sectors that will be used to inform annual revisions of Provincial Development Plans, as well as for planning by MAIL, MRRD, ANDMA and other ministries/government agencies at the sub-national levels. Based on this, Community Development Plans in the targeted Community Development Councils (CDCs) will be formulated - that integrate climate change and DRM considerations into development planning.

Within this frame gender-sensitive climate change risk and vulnerability assessments at community level will be prepared by engaging and consulting with target women, women groups and representatives of women groups. Socioeconomic information will be reported by gender to enable discussion on disparities. Problems, issues, and priorities affecting women (vulnerability and privacy issues due to displacement, neglect of nutrition, insecurity and economic burden in conflict, coping with burden after disasters, time spend on firewood collection and fetching water, incidence of diseases and access to health facilities, cultural discrimination, lack of education, etc.) will be identified by consulting both men and women. In consultation with women, gender risk mitigation actions may include mandatory consultations with women in local need assessments, gender-targeted CCA awareness activities, prioritized activities for involvement and benefit of women in the results framework, involvement of women in planning, implementation, and monitoring, quotas for women among project staff and project board, and provision of financial support to promote participation of women. For integration of gender at community level, village plans will be prepared in consultation with women and will respond to their needs on priority basis. Women will be given specific roles in disaster response and in implementing and monitoring adaptation activities. Sub-national partners will be sensitized about gender participation and will be trained on preparing gender sensitive work plans, empowerment of women in implementation by giving them lead roles, and involvement of women in monitoring and reporting along with men.

**Output 1.2: All targeted communities are trained to assess climate risks and vulnerability and to plan and implement autonomous adaptation measures:** This output would improve decision-making and implementation of climate-induced risk reduction measures in selected communities. Awareness of the need to incorporate climate information into DRM and other district-level and local level planning will be improved amongst community members, CDCs and district-level representatives of MAIL and MRRD. This awareness raising will be conducted in local languages (particularly Dari and Pashto) and will be tailored to the diverse needs of the targeted beneficiaries.



By conducting awareness-raising and training activities as well as undertaking participatory risk mapping and vulnerability assessments, the capacity of local communities, CDCs and MAIL and MRRD district-level offices for decision-making and implementation of DRR measures will be enhanced. This will result in reduced risk to lives and livelihoods within targeted communities as a result of climate-induced natural disasters.

## **Component 2: Restoration of degraded lands and climate-resilient livelihood interventions**

This component will implement existing successfully tested approaches, adapted to local conditions, along with several new innovations to better assist communities to adopt climate-resilient livelihood options. It is envisaged that the introduction of adapted proven and improved practices will increase the diversity of livelihood options and thereby significantly reduce climate vulnerabilities of targeted communities, the poor and the most deprived. This will be accomplished by researching technological solutions for reclaiming land from desertification and employing techniques to rehabilitate lands from damage caused by floods and landslides, ensuring improved access to water supply for crops and households, providing options for securing additional diverse sources of incomes and looking at opportunities that could grant greater access to markets. In addition, small-scale rural infrastructure such as check dams and terracing will be constructed that will reduce the risk of losses and damages caused by climate-induced disaster events (such as floods and flash floods).

***Outcome:** Community based land restoration, water management and climate resilient livelihoods solutions adopted*

**Output 2.1:** Scalable approaches for restoration of lands affected by desertification and/ or erosion introduced in pilot areas: Referring to the Afghanistan Environmental Impact Assessment Regulation available in NEPA and the UNDP's[3] Social and Environmental Standards, the project will demonstrate the use of adapted proven and new technologies for climate change resilient reclamation of lands affected by desertification. This may include such techniques like i) the application of a new plant-based paste of modified sodium carboxymethyl cellulose solution[4] for the improvement of crop cultivation on irrigated sand desert lands and ii) the establishment of new dryland woodlands of pistachio that are intercropped with *Ferula asafoetida* – for the extraction of a prized gum resin as non-timber forest product. Detailed assessment of these and other options of land restoration will be examined during the PPG phase and the most feasible and cost-effective solutions that at the same time offer a potential for leveraging additional investments and public private partnerships will be prioritized.

To reduce soil erosion and rehabilitate erosion affected lands, combinations of physical and vegetative methods will be promoted in vulnerable communities. This will reduce damage to crops, infrastructure and settlements caused by unhampered surface runoff after rainfall and will increase infiltration and accordingly improve soil moisture and groundwater recharge.

**Output 2.2:** Small-scale rural water infrastructure and new water technologies introduced at community level: To reduce the risks associated with limited water for crop production and household needs, the project will assess and implement different cost-effective infrastructure at the community level such as check dams, and percolation ponds for increasing the water retention in upper catchments and improved irrigation systems by canal lining and efficient irrigation

techniques to reduce the impact of climate change related water scarcity. Drip irrigation and water harvesting techniques will also be introduced at the level of households or communities to improve water efficiency. The exact figures and locations of these small-scale rural water infrastructure will be identified through comprehensive assessment during the PPG phase. These measures will be undertaken after an appropriate hazard and risk mapping and vulnerability assessment (including assessment and addressing of potential adverse gender impacts) and before any infrastructure investment takes place.

**Output 2.3: Climate resilient and diverse livelihoods established through introduction of technologies, training of local women and men and assistance in understanding of and access to markets and payment instruments:** To avoid over-reliance on traditional open field farming of low value staples such as wheat, successfully piloted and sustainable alternative income generating options will be promoted and setup across various targeted communities. These activities will promote women and youth empowerment. Some of such options may include high value crops such as saffron, cotton, ferula and market fruits and vegetables, effectively grown in high-density orchards, low water-use tunnel farming, propagation of medicinal plant nurseries, vegetable trellising, solar dehydration and packing of fruits, early or late variety vegetables, etc. Options will also be explored for social impact investment financing for the construction of small community-based food processing facilities. Before any alternative options are promoted among communities, market assessments will be undertaken to determine financial and longer-term economic viability of each of the proposed operations.

To build off the impressive efforts of the LITACA project, particularly the “One Village One Product” initiative that has created many product lines including shoes, handbags, laptop carry cases etc., additional markets and a new innovative payment option will be explored to help vulnerable communities and their households capture new markets and incomes from a larger global customer base. This work will entail working with promoters in large lucrative markets to advertise select (quality and customer desired) Afghan agricultural and non-agricultural products. It may also include the purchase of raw and semi-processed materials and accompanying services for local value addition. The innovative payment scheme for products and services will consist of the use of mobile phone-based payments. Currently the electricity utility DABS and the mobile phone company Roshan already jointly use such payment methods. The Law and Order Trust Fund Afghanistan (LOTFA) project of UNDP has introduced this for making payments to security personnel in remote areas. The opportunities of using ripplenet<sup>[5]</sup>, a decentralized ledger technology for rapid and liquid international payments would be assessed in close dialogue with the Central Bank of Afghanistan and commercial banks while using newly emerging electronic wallets and payment rails such as Mojaloop (<http://mojaloop.io/>) and R3 Corda (<http://www.r3.com>).

### **Component 3: Natural forests sustainably managed and new forest areas established by reforestation**

This component is based on the priorities of the Government of Afghanistan for climate change adaptation. Afghanistan’s NAPA highlights forests and woodlands as ecosystems highly vulnerable to climate change impact and at the same time providing an important and increasing contribution to climate change adaptation through their regulatory and provisioning services. Forests and woodlands play a key role in ecosystem-based adaptation, e.g. through “green” disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change and the provision of climate change resilient livelihoods. Promotion of community-based forest management and afforestation projects in ways to conserve land, water resources and wood production is therefore listed as high priority in the NAPA. This component will extend and complement the government’s ongoing work on participatory Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) process in Afghanistan with particular attention to climate change risks and vulnerabilities as well as the adaptation potentials of forests and woodlands. Learnings from past projects completed by the EU and FAO on sustainable resource and forest community management will be taken and lessons learnt applied, adapted and complemented in new areas.

*Outcome: Climate-resilient sustainable management practices in forests and woodlands implemented across targeted provinces*

**Output 3.1: Provincial forest maps and information management system established and maintained:** To understand production landscape, a desk review and field survey will be conducted to identify and map critical ecological zones, conservation areas (rangelands, woodlands, planted and natural forests), key species, medicinal plants and rain-fed cropping areas. Woodlands and forests will be assessed in accordance to risks and vulnerabilities they are exposed to due to climate change – directly by the changing patterns of climatic factors and indirectly by climate change-triggered changes in natural processes and land-use practices. Field surveys will be performed to create an inventory of keystone species (flora and fauna) and to identify major causes and threats to habitats and species loss. Furthermore, information will be systematically gathered, stored and analyzed on current and future adaptation potential using and preserving the regulatory and provisioning functions of forests and woodlands. Information will be used to iteratively adjust forest protection strategies and to determine sustainable use and management options, rehabilitation methods and species composition for afforestation to maintain resilience and functional integrity of forest systems under changing climate. This work will also include mapping of current and – as far as possible – past boundaries of forest, woodland, rangeland, farming and settlement areas with satellite data and observations. These geo-spatial data will form a baseline for the government to monitor and react on expansion of cropping into forest areas or rangelands that is in a large extent driven by climate change through accelerated productivity loss and/or destruction of current arable lands combined with the perception of forests and woodlands as “not cultivated land reserve”. This conversion often represents a maladaptation, resulting in the loss of forest ecosystem services. All information will be compiled into an online information knowledge management portal (see knowledge management subsection) to store environmental information and geo-spatial data. This information will be used for informed decision making and policy formulation.

**Output 3.2: Provincial climate-smart forest management plans developed:** To address the general lack of sufficient planning for forest management and in particular the need for integration of climate change risks and vulnerabilities and adaptation potentials of forests and woodlands in Afghanistan, a participatory mechanism for forest management will be established, approved and formalized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA). The provincial climate-smart forest management plans will provide the framework for integration of forest management and rangeland management in the CDCs to institutionalize community-based conservation and sustainable use of forest resources, under consideration of experience from FAO’s 2009 project in Balkh, Nangarhar and Baghlan provinces. To promote ecosystem or watershed management approach, as part of the provincial forest management plans valley level conservation and adaptation plans will be prepared. These plans will provide a framework for community-based forestry, interaction between communities and provincial forestry departments and between communities within watersheds.

**Output 3.3: Community-based forestry established and contributing to climate change resilient forest management:** To reduce livelihood vulnerability in drought and flood prone communities and encourage the sustainable use of and climate change resilient management of forest areas, community-based approaches will be employed to plant trees and restore and sustainably manage critical forest areas. This will not only assist in further diversification of rural incomes, thus reducing climate change related vulnerabilities, but will also support the more effective management of natural resources and allow for ecosystem-based adaptation that can partly mitigate the risks associated with droughts and floods - by natural regulatory ecosystem services of the forests and woodlands in these watersheds. Valley-level forest management plans elaborated in a participatory way under Output 3.2 will provide a framework for

community-based forestry and for collaboration between the communities and with the provincial forestry departments. The work with communities will integrate the development of suitable institutions and mechanisms incentivizing sustainable and climate-smart forest management and provision of needed knowledge and technical skills. The facilitation of collaboration between the provincial forestry departments and communities will be a key element. At least 200 hectares of degraded woodlands will be restored and rehabilitated. Thereby the project will build on and complement the experiences of FAO's 2009 project, which established in other provinces forest management committees, localized forest management plans and promoted drought resistant agroforestry species such as pistachio and almond as well as tree crops coping with limited irrigation water availability poplar, apricot, and mulberry trees.

#### **Component 4: Knowledge management and M&E**

This component will focus on capturing, disseminating and using the knowledge accumulated by the project and other similar projects in the country. Quarterly surveys and internal workshops will be conducted to record failures and best practices. They will then be recorded through quarterly and annual progress reports and shared with stakeholders. The monitoring system will be participatory in nature, involving community members so as to ensure knowledge and information generated through the project remains with the communities.

##### **Output 4.1 A local level participatory M&E System for monitoring of community-based projects on the ground designed**

This output will support the design and implementation of a local-level, participatory M&E system for the community-based projects on the targeted areas. This M&E system will comprise part of the Local Forest Monitoring System described under Component 3 and training and awareness under component 1 and tracking climate resilient livelihoods projects under component 2. Information from the M&E system will be used to inform the review of training materials, toolkits and best practice guidelines to be made available through the UNDP website and line ministry websites. This information will also serve to inform future planning and implementation of community-based project at the district and local levels as well as to fine-tune community-based Sustainable Land Management and Sustainable Forest Management SLM/SFM Plans under component 3. Lessons learned on SLM/SFM practices through the project interventions will be collated and disseminated nationwide. The dissemination will take place through a variety of channels such as being made available through the national resource centre, being included in on-going training activities and through awareness-raising campaigns.

##### **Output 4.2. Improved adaptive management through enhanced information and knowledge sharing and effective M&E System**

Under this outputs, best practices, innovations and lessons learned, which can be translated into useful communication materials or boundary objects such as policy briefs, technical advisory notes, guidelines, impact stories, as well as modules for wider dissemination especially targeting best climate resilient projects as well as irrigation improved project implemented on the ground. Under component one of this proposed LDCF project Capacity building events will also be conducted to disseminate knowledge and experiences generated from the project to various stakeholders/user-groups such as local planners, policymakers, watershed managers and practitioners, agriculture extension workers, Kabul, Mazar, Paktia and Ghazni University students (the youth).

The project will establish an M&E system that tracks results, monitors and manages risks and ensures timely reporting that meets the requirements of GEF and UNDP. Under this output best practices of the project will be collected and shared with other partners such as UN agencies (FAO, WFP, OCHA) and relevant line ministries such as Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), Ministry of Women Affairs (MoFA) and Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW). The best practices of the project will also be disseminated to local communities. For example, the best practices of one province will be shared with other provinces during the project implementation through project cross visits between provinces where GEF projects from UNDP and other implementing partners (UNEP and FAO) are being implemented.

The project will be developed training materials, toolkits and best practices guidelines and will make sure that the lessons learned are available beyond project implementation. It will also support and inform the capacity-building activities for government staff (e.g. the training programme developed under Component 1 and 2). Furthermore, best practice guidelines on climate resilience livelihoods projects – drawing from examples elsewhere in Afghanistan as well as internationally – will be developed and disseminated to local communities. These will focus on aspects of management of natural resources that ensure long-term sustainability of these resources while at the same time supporting community livelihoods. These guidelines will have a specific focus on techniques for forest rehabilitation/restoration through assisted natural regeneration and similar activities as well as best practices rangeland rehabilitation and management. These best practices and lessons learned will be collated, synthesized and packaged to provide information that is tailored to Afghanistan's social and environmental context

Cross visit under outcome 1, 2 and 3 will be organized in which community elders and formers from one province to community elders/formers in another province will be sent to learn about climate resilient project best practices and to show community elders, formers new and improved ways of the selection, design and implementation of livelihoods project. It lets them see for themselves how it is done. They can gather information from one village and exchange ideas with each other. These cross visits will be organized between other GEF projects being implemented on the ground such cross visits between UNDP, FAO and UNEP projects.

Finally, the project will engage in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the project, ensuring that lessons learned from the project are documented. As part of this, the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, Indigenous People's Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be monitored. Some of the key areas of M&E include the project mid-term review, the project terminal evaluation, monitoring of the project indicators, and preparation of project reports, including UNDP annual reports and GEF Project Implementation Review (PIR). Financial audits and third-party monitoring will be conducted annually as well.

**Alignment with GEF focal area:**

- CCA-1            Reduce vulnerability and increase resilience through innovation and technology transfer for climate change adaptation
- CCA-2            Mainstream CCA and resilience for systemic impact

## Incremental/additional cost reasoning:

The Government of Afghanistan is requesting support from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) to remove existing barriers by strengthening local capacity to effectively respond to and manage climate change risks threatening water resources, agricultural production and livelihoods. Without the proposed project, business-as-usual would continue and government and donor investments in agriculture and rural livelihoods would be threatened by climate change impacts and may lead to maladaptation. The project will focus on four provinces (Ghazni, Samangan, Kunar and Paktia), where climate change induced challenges related to food insecurity and poverty are high, but in which significant climate change resilient productivity and production increases are deemed possible. It will achieve this through the following Components: (i) Capacities of national and sub-national governments and communities are strengthened to address climate change impacts (2) Restoration of degraded lands and climate-resilient livelihoods interventions. (3) Natural forests sustainably managed and new forest areas established by reforestation.

Climate change impact assessment for Afghanistan<sup>[6]</sup> identifies drought as economically the most damaging hazard affecting Afghanistan. Samangan, Ghazni and Paktia, are predicted as being moderately negatively affected by rain and snow-melt related droughts. However, projected temperature increase will additionally and more substantially increase aridity. The other major hazard affecting livelihoods in Afghanistan is floods. According to the Afghanistan Disaster Risk Profile prepared by World Bank, more than 1 million people live in flood hazard areas in Kunar, Samangan and Ghazni. Paktia is predicted to be affected by heavy spring precipitation events, which may result in floods. This LDCF project will address these problems through the construction of resilient irrigation infrastructure and providing livelihood opportunities to vulnerable communities of the mentioned provinces.

In Afghanistan, provincial level climate data is not available. Therefore, below general information is provided from the UNDP climate change for agriculture sector and UNEP Climate Change Scenario Perspectives. The following province-specific information on specific climate threats, to which communities in the proposed provinces (Samangan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktia) are vulnerable, is available:

**Kunar.** Asadabad is the main center of Kunar. Asadabad's climate is classified as warm and temperate. The rain in Asadabad falls mostly in the winter, with relatively little rain in the summer. Kunar is in the zone of influence of the monsoon climate contributing to higher than average for Afghanistan precipitation. The average annual temperature is 19.4°C. Annual precipitation here averages to 532 mm, which is much higher in the mountains and lower in the lowlands. Kunar province is located in the northeast region of the country where precipitation projections are more uncertain with no clear trend for annual precipitation for the past and future. However, most models predict a distinct decrease in precipitation during the spring season, which would significantly affect rain-fed agriculture. For the relevant region in the northeast and central highlands projections show decreases in these relevant regions of around 20% until 2100. Kunar is the province with the highest percentage of forest cover in Afghanistan. Most agriculture depends on irrigation. However, these forests are already stressed by unsustainable use. Climate change, in particular changing rainfall patterns will - in future – not only cause adverse impact on forests and ecosystem services they provide, but will also directly impact on patterns and quantities of available irrigation water and on growth of natural rangeland vegetation for livestock, causing particular vulnerabilities. The forests in Kunar are mostly east Afghan montane conifer forests consisting of *quercus*, *pinus*, *cedrus*, *picea* and *abies* species, and Baluchistan xeric woodlands consisting of *reptonia* and *quercus* species<sup>[7]</sup>. Remote sensing analyses indicate that Kunar province respectively lost 53% and 29% of forest cover between 1977 and 2002<sup>[8]</sup>. These forest types occur in high elevations with relatively more precipitation compared to the rest of Afghanistan. The main pressures on these forests include illegal logging (high-value timber is often smuggled over the border into Pakistan) and extraction of firewood. Once cut, these forests are unable to regenerate as pressure from livestock grazing combined with degradation of bare soils are detrimental to germination and recruitment of forest tree seedlings. Consequently, deforestation and forest degradation result in these ecosystem types being converted into shrublands, with losses in biodiversity as well as reductions in carbon stocks

**Ghazni:** Ghazni province has diverse relief from lowlands to altitude of 2000 m and more. The climate therefore varies from warm-semi-arid to cool temperate-humid. In Ghazni center there is little rainfall throughout the year with an average of 254 mm. The temperature here averages 10.5°C. Precipitation is the lowest in June, with an average of 0 mm. The greatest amount of precipitation occurs in February, with an average of 53 mm. Decreases in rainfall by 205mm until 2100 are predicted. With an average temperature of 24.8°C, July is the hottest month of the year. The lowest average temperatures in the year occur in January when it is around -7.5°C. Ghazni province has no forest, but has vast rangelands and little arable farming, mainly dependent on irrigation, locally also rain-fed. Livelihoods in Ghazni are mainly agricultural and they are extremely prone to the impact of climate change, in particular in forms of droughts with resulting impact in form of low productivity of rangelands, crop failure in rain-fed farming and shortage of irrigation water. This province lies at a high altitude (generally 600–3,000 masl) and include over 75,000 km<sup>2</sup> of Afghanistan's summer pasture used by both the local, sedentary communities and nomadic Kuchi pastoralists[9]. These pastures are largely dominated by grasses, shrubs and forbs. Of particular importance is the Dasht-i Nawar pasture that comprises approximately 600 km<sup>2</sup> of rangeland in northern Ghazni. In addition to the valuable grazing, the seasonal wetlands in Dasht-i Nawar are critical habitat for migratory birds[10] and others that utilise the habitat as feeding and breeding grounds[11]. For example, these wetlands are the highest elevation breeding grounds for the greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) in the world. Anecdotal evidence also points to the existence of small populations of the urial (*Ovis orientalis*) and the Himalayan ibex (*Capra sibirica*) in the mountains west of Dasht-i-Nawar. These sensitive habitats are vulnerable to the effects of over-grazing, water extraction and other activities of local communities.

**Samangan:** In Samangan the climate is a local steppe climate and varies between hot-subhumid in the northern hills and lowlands and cool-temperate-humid in the southern mountains. There is little rainfall with 277 mm throughout the year. The average temperature is 14.0°C. The rainfall season is October-May. Land-cover in Samangan is dominated by rangelands and rain-fed agriculture with similar shares. Irrigated agriculture is limited to few larger areas, which are however, important in terms of livelihoods and are concentrated in the Samangan valley near the provincial centre and north of it. In the east Samangan has some degenerated forest or woodlands. Agriculture-based livelihoods are already in peril due to rangeland degradation caused by overgrazing, land erosion in rain-fed agriculture lands and expansion of these into rangelands and degradation of tree and shrub stands from fuel wood cutting and livestock. Climate change much exacerbates these problems, reducing the resilience of agricultural systems and ecosystems. In particular increasing frequency and severity of droughts, overall increasing aridity due to higher temperatures, reduced annual rainfall by 20% until 2100 and more irregular rainfall patterns cause lower and unreliable yields in rain-fed agriculture, challenge irrigation water availability and reduce the productivity of rangelands. Additionally, there is an increase in disaster risks.

**Paktia:** The climate in Paktia is influenced by the monsoon and can be characterized warm-humid to warm-temperate-suhumid. The rain in Gardez, the centre of Paktia, falls mostly in the winter, with relatively little rain in the summer. The average annual temperature is 9.8°C. About 340 mm of precipitation falls annually. In Paktia most arable farming is irrigated and is concentrated in the valleys of the central parts of the province around Gardez. Paktia also has vast rangelands and in the east of the province in Afghanistan terms substantial areas are covered by woodlands and forests. Climate change related vulnerabilities in the western and central parts of Paktia are mainly related to an increasing shortage of irrigation water caused by an overall increasing aridity due to higher temperatures and predicted reduction of rainfall by 20% until 2100 combined with a lower reliability of water flow in the main rivers. Furthermore, with increasing temperatures during the agricultural season, demand in irrigation water is on the raise. In the east of Paktia the forests and woodlands suffer from degradation caused by unsustainable use and exploitation of timber, while climate change affects the regeneration of these tree and shrub stands. This

climate change impact on forests and woodlands thus reduces the availability of products from these ecosystems and their protective services, thus challenging livelihoods of local communities and increasing disaster risk for these. All over the province reduced and changing rainfall patterns affect the productivity of rangelands for livestock.

Country-wide, 20 percent of rural Afghans are extremely poor, another 60 percent are vulnerable to extreme poverty, and the balance, 20 percent, are less poor, but still vulnerable to poverty. Samangan and Kunar are amongst provinces in which the poverty rate is high, leaving residents to deal with numerous challenges. Similarly, Paktia is another poor province where the poverty rate is high.

The worsening climatic conditions in these four provinces impacts negatively upon socio-economic development, creating multiple impacts for given sectors. In terms of ecosystem services, soil water content, water for irrigation, firewood and grazing are most affected by the climatic hazards in these four provinces. Sectors such as agriculture and water resources are impacted by changes in climate. Negative effects on food crops, market crops and livestock components of livelihood activities are to be expected given the importance of these activities to the livelihood portfolio in rural areas of these four provinces. In terms of livelihood means, irrigated agriculture, livestock herders and dryland farmers are considered the most susceptible to the impacts of the various climatic hazards. Kuchi pastoralists are considered to be also affected in Ghazni, Kunar and Paktia provinces.

Most of the agricultural areas in these provinces are mountainous areas where most of the water for agriculture comes from springs and Karez (underground irrigation tunnels). However, due to climate change many springs and Karez have already dried or may stop delivering irrigation water in the near future. Agricultural activities in mountain valleys of Kunar, Paktia and Ghazni are adversely affected by smaller snow depths leading to less irrigable water. The cumulative effects of more frequent and intense droughts on reservoirs and groundwater have threatened the water supply of the communities located in these four provinces, leading to a range of humanitarian crises, including disease, population displacement and conflict specifically in Paktia, Kunar and Ghazni.

Without the incremental GEF contribution, the baseline scenario will result in continued loss of global environmental values. The management of Afghanistan's natural resources will continue to be inadequate, leading to undermining of global environmental values, continued emission of greenhouse gases through deforestation and degradation of forest and rangeland ecosystems, and continued degradation and desertification of rangeland ecosystems. Activities in Afghanistan to reduce loss of global environmental values will continue to be ad hoc, not planned at appropriate scales and not planned in an integrated manner to build synergies between interventions in different types of landscapes. Baseline activities will continue to focus on short-term socio-economic interests at the expense of long-term benefits of sustainable land management and forest management practices.

The incremental GEF contribution will support maintenance of global environmental values such as climate-resilient livelihoods interventions, institutional capacity development of government, management of land and forest resources in Afghanistan. The LDCF project will promote climate-resilient livelihoods, conservation of forest and rangeland resources through implementation of community-based approaches - sustainable land management (SLM) and sustainable forest management (SFM) and livelihoods intervention on the ground. This will include a strengthened enabling environment for cross-sectoral



decision-making and improved mainstreaming of climate change considerations into planning and budgeting processes at provincial and local levels. At the local level, communities will be capacitated to improve planning and implementation of climate change adaptation projects both livelihoods and improved irrigation infrastructure. This will enhance the long-term potential irrigation water and livelihoods opportunities to provide critical goods and services to generate a wide range of socio-economic and environmental benefits. In addition, through this LDCF project, the springs and Karez will be rehabilitated and water use efficiency be increased through improved irrigation infra-structures.

This LDCF project will address all these issues by complementary sets of activities targeting vulnerable livelihoods and disaster risks in parallel. The project will improve climate resilience of agricultural livelihoods through adaptation measures targeting irrigation systems, crop selection and cultivation practices. It will reduce dependence on particularly risky agricultural livelihoods through the introduction of value-added and diversified livelihood options. Furthermore, the project will support maintenance of forest and woodlands for providing climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services. The project will target a total of 40,000 beneficiaries (10,000 per each province).

#### **Global environment benefits/adaptation benefits:**

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process has been designed to create a comprehensive system through which countries can integrate climate change adaptation into national and local planning. Through the support to the setting-up of the NAP institutional framework in priority sectors, the project will contribute to improving local and provincial planning of adaptation, which in turn will offer guidance for internal and donor supported development resourcing, monitoring and assistance, as part of rural and provincial planning, and budgeting. Targeting the Community Development Councils (CDCs) is an innovative approach, as these local actors for development planning have so far not been involved in adaptation planning. Raising awareness and building capacities to integrate CCA into local planning and budgeting within these institutions could yield significant results in terms of effectively taking CCA into account in the mid- and long-term and progressing towards a paradigm shift where climate change is fully part of development planning. The development of the NAP process in the sectors of agriculture and rural development and water would therefore develop an innovative approach of pooling resources, strengthening capacities, sharing knowledge, working in partnership with the various organizations already in place to build on existing work and successes, and ensure a sustainable impact of the project covered by the numerous actors engaged in the process. In particular, the focus on the Ministries of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and Ministries of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), which have a central role working with the CDCs, will support the dissemination of climate change consideration among the different communities.

More comprehensive measures to advance adaptation planning, looking at how to address the main gaps and build capacities, which will be tested at the local and provincial level in one province first, then could be replicated to other three provinces.

The LDCF financed project will undertake activities aimed at mobilization and engagement of local communities and their various committees, women and youth groups, seed providers and associations as cost-effective way of coordinating their activities and minimizing trade-offs and conflicts under multi-purpose and multi-stakeholders' usage of water resources without compromising the resilience of the system. Experiences from other places have shown that both the extent of long-term benefits, and in particular their sustainability, are directly related to the community ownership promoted through such mobilization efforts and strengthening of community-based groups. A key aspect of the programme is to develop the capacity at the local level to ensure

ownership and sustainability of the proposed interventions. The envisaged training of the population and extension services will build their capacities and will create the conditions for sustainable resilience and local development, by fostering the emergence of community groups capable to act appropriately and in sufficient time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss. Scaling-up of best practices from the project would help to better disseminate how livelihoods can be better sustained under climate changes and draw synergies from other programs, projects, processes and communities.

### **Innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up**

Identification and mainstreaming of adaptation options undertaken through all components of the project are expected to lead to project activities being sustained beyond lifetime of the project, and approaches being demonstrated through the project are expected to be scaled-up to other projects, provinces/districts within Afghanistan.

Emphasis on improving local-level planning and implementation on DRR and climate change adaptation will strengthen capacity of local communities and district-level officials to plan for and implement measures for climate change adaptation beyond the project lifespan. This is complemented by formulation of Provincial Development Plans (PDPs) and Community Development Plans (CDPs) that specifically integrate climate change considerations, further promoting ongoing planning and implementation of climate-resilient interventions after project completion.

Through support to climate-resilient livelihoods and diversified income-generating opportunities, participating communities will have access to greater financial means from their increased income. Coupled with awareness-raising and training on integrating climate change into local-level actions, these activities will promote a sustainable cycle whereby households with improved income are able to use their returns to further invest in their livelihoods. The introduction of innovative electronic ledger wallet and mobile application-based payments for products and services – agricultural and non-agricultural - will provide practically applicable mechanisms for overcoming currently widely existing hurdles for business development and effectively remove transaction costs. This is expected to remain sustainable long after completion of the project implementation period, as continued improvements in livelihoods and income will lead to re-investment and thus continue gains. Moreover, livelihood activities conducted within the project sites can be easily replicated with minimal input costs by neighboring (non-participating) communities. This is likely to lead to scaling up of project activities outside of the project areas.

Under Component 4 of the project, lessons learned and best practices generated through the project and other initiatives will be collated and communicated through platforms such as Istanbul Process<sup>[12]</sup> and other regional knowledge-sharing opportunities. Not only will this promote replication of project activities in other countries within the region, but it may also catalyze further investments for scaling up project activities at the national level. Lessons learned will provide detailed documentation of benefits of diversified community livelihoods to build climate resilience, with a focus on successes of empowering women and youth in participating in livelihood activities. In addition, community members will be trained on how to conduct proper supervision, monitoring and implementation of project interventions, as well as conduct proper maintenance of project assets and infrastructure beyond the life of the project. Through this approach, it is envisaged that Community Development Council members will be able to enhance skills and implement similar interventions elsewhere in their own community space.

The project will support the integration of climate change considerations into local level planning. This will ensure sustainability of restoration activities and other adaptation measures and support scaling up. Climate resilience will be properly integrated throughout the development framework at the provincial and community levels with supporting legislation, policy, standard operating procedures (SOPs), budgets, and regulations, integration of gender-sensitive approaches. At provincial level, Provincial Development Plans (PDP) will integrate climate-induced disaster risks.

Through this LCDF project, the following documents and strategy will be revised or updated, where necessary:

Afghanistan Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (ACCSAC)

Designated National Authority for Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Projects in Afghanistan

Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions for Afghanistan

National Adaptation Plan for Afghanistan

The sustainability of the project results will be achieved in the following ways:

- Revising policies and strategies to mainstream climate change adaptation into development planning will lead to a permanent inclusion of the project's approaches into policy at all levels (nationally as explained above, but particularly at the local level);
- Building awareness and understanding of the risks posed by climate-induced disasters among multipliers, like line ministries and their subnational agencies, provincial and district authorities and the project activities aiming at sharing of lessons learned will contribute to a long-lasting incorporation of the climate change-related topics in the institutional agendas at different levels;
- Strengthening institutional and technical capacity of national and sub-national authorities in risk and vulnerability assessment and planning and implementing of climate change adaptation measures;
- Involving local communities, especially women and other vulnerable groups, in risk and vulnerability assessment, decision-making and implementation ensures their ownership beyond the project life;
- The restoration activities for land and water will build on local testing and participatory planning and implementation at community-level. Community members will provide in-kind contributions. These three elements – local testing, participatory planning and implementation and community contributions will ensure practicability of the approaches and local ownership, which together will lead to sustainability of results and their subsequent replication.
- Providing options that support livelihoods and reduce losses, while remaining economically viable and/or affordable to local communities ensures that reclaimed and restored lands will be maintained, and further expanded and new livelihoods will be sustained beyond the life of the project;
- The forest management related activities will provide results, which will directly be incorporated in the government's forest administration system and thus be used and updated beyond the life of the project;

· Community-based forest management will be designed in a way that provides i) long-term user rights and responsibilities for local communities, and ii) allows for sustainable and permanent extractive use of forest products and benefits from ecosystem services, thus creating ownership of communities and improving the performance of forest management thereby supporting the sustainable implementation of the approach by both local communities and government forestry authorities.

Close involvement of government institutions and departments in the project's development and implementation processes promises potential for future incorporation of the project's approaches into other ongoing planning and strategies. Additionally, it is expected that strengthening of capacities among main government stakeholders will enable continued mainstreaming of climate considerations into sectoral planning and decision-making. Furthermore, extensive training and capacity building of local communities and technical staff on adaptation interventions will align future activities to be climate resilient. Overall, as a result of increased participation, project interventions are more likely to be replicated and/or scaled up.

There is also potential for replication of livelihood diversification interventions, both nationally and internationally. These interventions may be easily replicated in other villages with relatively small investment, especially since such interventions will be implemented through experienced national NGOs. The project will actively share experience about approaches, techniques, successes and failures with government agencies and NGOs. The departments of MAIL, in charge of NRM and Forestry will collect all information and will promote replication in the frame of own projects, as well as projects of implementation partners through provision of documentation and facilitation of direct sharing of experience, e.g. through exchange visits. Such replication would be able to build on and leverage from ongoing initiatives supported by development partners to enhance livelihoods of agriculturally active households as well as those involved in handicrafts production. There is, similarly, potential for replication in other countries through sharing of lessons learned across the region.

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[1] Landell Mills 2016. Feasibility Study for the Panj-Amu River Basin Project (DCI-ASIE/2015/361-001) Draft Final Report, Supplementary Document 13 Climate Risk Assessment and Management Report.

[2] Created in 2009, NAPA takes a multi-sectoral approach to support agriculture, biodiversity and ecosystems, forestry and rangeland, natural disasters and water. This streamlined approach, particularly as each related to agriculture, is essential to build resilience of rural communities and raise local income levels.

[3] <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/operations1/undp-social-and-environmental-standards/>

[4] <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2095809916311560>

[5] RippleNet makes it easy to connect and transact across its robust network of 100+ banks and payment providers worldwide.

[6] World Food Programme/United Nations Environment Programme. "Climate Change in Afghanistan – What Does It Mean for Rural Livelihoods and Food Security?"

[7] UNEP. 2008. *Biodiversity Profile of Afghanistan*.

[8] UNEP. 2003. *Post-conflict environmental assessment: Afghanistan*. UNEP, Geneva.

[9] Ali, A. & Shaoliang, Y. 2013. Highland Rangelands of Afghanistan: Significance, Management Issues, and Strategies. In: Ning, W., Rawat, G. S., Joshi, S., Ismail, M. & Sharma, E. [eds.] *High-Altitude Rangelands and their Interfaces in the Hindu Kush Himalayas: Special Publication On the occasion of ICIMOD's 30th anniversary*. ICIMOD.

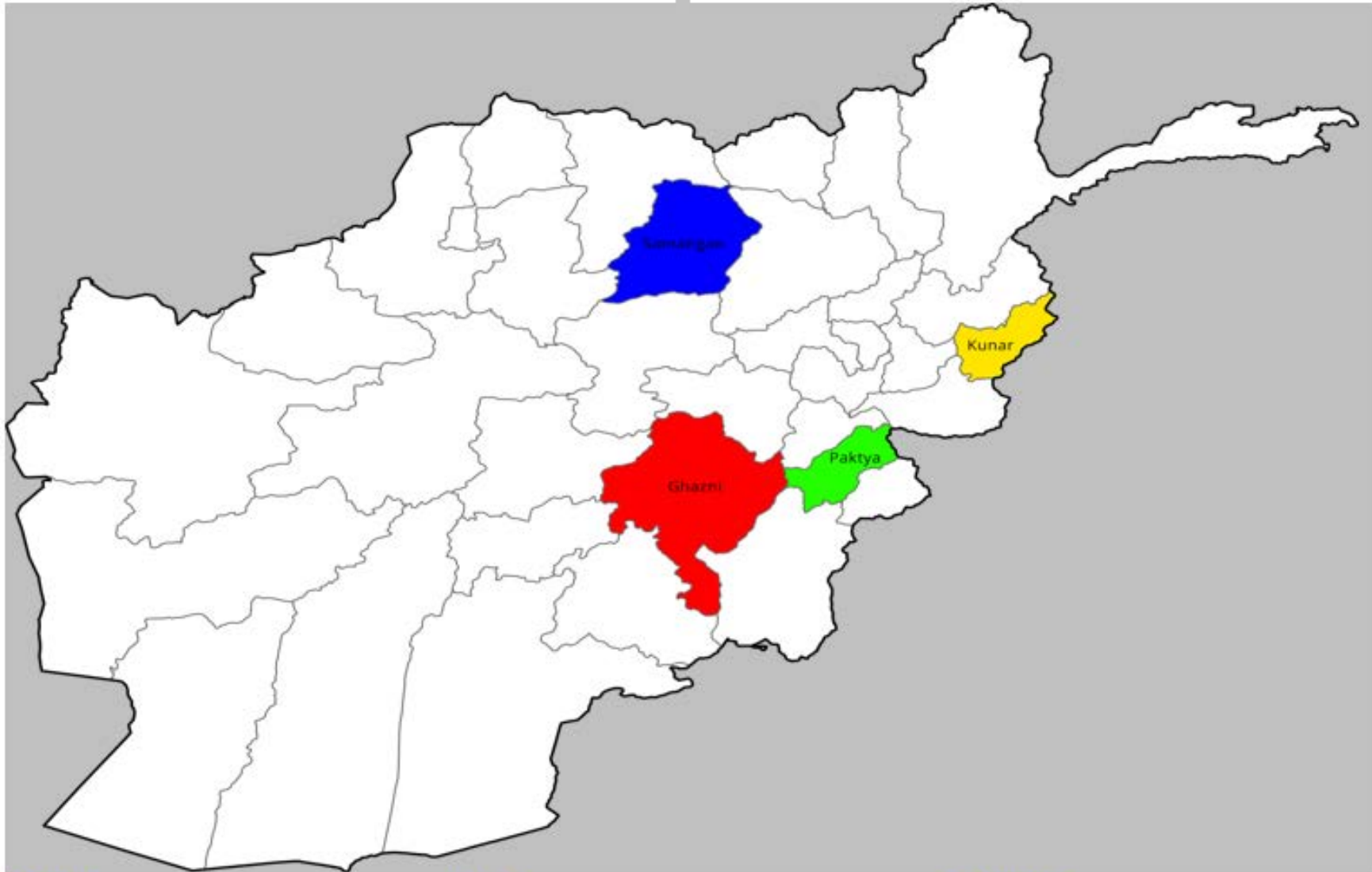
[10] Including avocets (*Recurvirosta avocetta*), redshanks (*Tringa totanus*), greater sandpipers (*Charadrius leschenaultia*) and common terns (*Sterna hirundo*).

[11] UNEP. 2008. *Biodiversity Profile of Afghanistan*.

[12] The Istanbul Process was established to provide a platform to discuss regional issues, particularly encouraging security, political, and economic cooperation among Afghanistan and its neighbors. See also: <http://www.hoa.gov.af/>

## 1b. Project Map and Coordinates

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place.



[Ghazni](#) N 33.5484025, E 68.4032319; [Paktia](#) (Paktva) N 33.599684, E 69.228991; [Samangan](#) N36.2653, E 68.0167; [Kunar](#) N 34.874167, E 71.152778 (all coordinates refer to provincial centres)

## 2. Stakeholders

Select the stakeholders that have participated in consultations during the project identification phase:

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Yes

Civil Society Organizations Yes

Private Sector Entities

If none of the above, please explain why:

**In addition, provide indicative information on how stakeholders, including civil society and indigenous peoples, will be engaged in the project preparation, and their respective roles and means of engagement.**

Interaction with the above stakeholders and their representatives has happened over the last several months, as the issues of climate change and its impact on various regions of Afghanistan have been discussed in several national, provincial and donor forums and workshops where UNDP is a key partner. Relevant government ministries and departments, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and UN agencies have been extensively consulted and have been involved in the preparation of this proposal, its components, outcomes, and outputs. The interactions happened in Kabul, regional hubs (north and east regional hubs), and during planning and monitoring exercises, and visits to some project areas. Once a blueprint of the project concept was in place, a one-day consultation workshop was held with key stakeholders (please see list below of key stakeholders) as well as with community members and target beneficiaries. The proposed project concept was appreciated by the participants. The participants were actively involved to elaborate and refine project objective, components, component type, outcomes and project outputs and budget allocation, etc.

The key project stakeholders will be members of local communities and indigenous peoples (particularly Kuchi nomads) at the project sites in the targeted provinces. The implementation of this project will include extensive stakeholder participation. At the community level, stakeholder engagement will be ensured through consultations with Community Development Councils (CDCs), men and women's shuras, women cooperatives, water user associations and other Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). This will be undertaken in such a manner that all vulnerable and marginalised groups (including women, youth, the elderly, IDPs, returnees, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities) are engaged from the outset to support planning, prioritisation, design and implementation of project activities that are culturally acceptable and tailored to the environmental and socio-economic contexts within recipient communities.

During the PPG phase, further comprehensive consultations will be undertaken to sensitise communities on project objectives and activities, with a special focus on engaging with vulnerable and marginalised groups, as above. The stakeholder engagement plan will also include a comprehensive consultation process with government actors (the head of state's office, environment, finance and planning bodies, sector and sub-national bodies, political parties and parliament and national statistics offices), non-governmental actors (civil society, academia, business and industry, the general public and communities, and the media) and development actors and will ensure the active involvement and participation of all stakeholders. Key stakeholders of the project include the following:

**Indigenous peoples, particularly Kuchi nomads:** are primarily reliant on pastoral practices in rangelands for their livelihoods. The proposed project will engage with indigenous peoples – inter alia through the Independent Department of Kuchi – following a similar model to that used in the PEACE project to include both sedentary and Kuchi pastoralists within an integrated management framework for rangelands. This will ensure that the priorities of the Kuchi nomads are included in the design and implementation of project interventions to reduce conflict over rangeland resources.

**National- and local-level Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and NGOs:** There are a number of CSOs and NGOs focused on supporting rural livelihoods in Afghanistan – such as Madera, AfghanAid, Mercy Corps, the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent and the members of the Afghan Civil Society Forum-organisation. These organizations will be adequately consulted during the PPG phase to identify opportunities for alignment of this project with ongoing initiatives. In particular, such organisations have insights into local socio-economic and environmental priorities related to community needs. The inclusion of CSOs/NGOs in project design will ensure that interventions address real priorities in local communities in a manner that is culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable.

**Community Development Committees, Forest Management Committees and Rangeland Social Associations:** Local-level governance mechanisms will be consulted during the PPG process as well as throughout implementation to identify and prioritize areas for community-based projects. Working through these bodies will facilitate community-based planning processes and will thus form the basis for participatory planning and implementation of project interventions. Through such direct involvement of local communities, greater buy-in will be achieved to promote local-level support of project activities. This will provide communities with opportunities for direct decision-making on the practices to be implemented as well as selection of the areas where these interventions will take place.

Under the Knowledge Management component Cross Visits (CV) will be organized to bring the stakeholders of one province to another province to share the best practices and learn from each other – processes such as selection, planning, design, implementation, supervision and monitoring of the project. These cross visits will be organized with other GEF projects being implemented on the ground by FAO and UNEP, as well as with other development projects on the ground.

**Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL):** MAIL will be the implementing partner for the project. MAIL has the mandate for supporting sustainable agriculture (i.e. drought management, irrigation infrastructure, livelihoods, food security, and livestock husbandry) and natural resource management (i.e. forests, rangeland, biodiversity, protected areas). As the chair of the Agricultural and Rural Development cluster of the National Priority Programme, MAIL will play a leading role in the coordination of planning for sustainable agriculture and land management between the relevant stakeholders including government institutions and local communities. More importantly, MAIL's CPO-NRM will be fully responsible for managing implementation of the proposed project in coordination with relevant institutions (i.e. NEPA). The project will help put into action MAIL's Natural Resource Management Strategy (2017 – 2021).



**National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA):** NEPA is Afghanistan's Operational Focal Point for GEF. NEPA's functions include coordination and monitoring of all activities relating to the environment in Afghanistan. As the chair of the inter-ministerial Committee for Environmental Coordination, NEPA will have a strong supporting role in the coordination of planning and implementation. In addition, it is expected that NEPA will play an important role in providing strategic advice and capacity development with Component 1 and in ecosystem and biodiversity related activities under Component 3.

**Provincial Governor's Office (PGO):** PGO is responsible for coordinating disaster management related activities among province level officers and liaising with Department of Disaster Preparedness (DDP) and national Emergency Operation Center (EOC).

**Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW):** This ministry is in-charge of improving and expanding large scale irrigation systems to cope with drought, which contributes to reduction of vulnerable and displaced people, and reduces damage to crops, livestock, property and other livelihoods.

**Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG):** IDLG coordinates climate change induced disaster management issues at the local provincial level through sub-national level governance.

**Ministry of Education:** The Ministry of Education can coordinate with local authorities in mainstreaming climate change issues into the school curriculum.

**The Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA):** The ministry will take special steps to reduce vulnerability of women in climate-induced disaster-prone areas. Department of Women Affairs (DOWA) at the provincial level supports outreach to women in the communities.

**Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA):** ANDMA is mandated to coordinate all activities related to disaster mitigation, preparedness and response at the central and provincial levels.

**MRRD:** The MRRD will be the other responsible party and will play a key role in the implementation of this project through its CDCs already established through NDP.

**Community Development Councils, Forest Management Associations and Rangeland Management Associations:** Local-level governance mechanisms will be consulted during the PPG process as well as throughout implementation to identify and prioritize areas for community-based sustainable agriculture and natural resource management (forest and rangeland). Working through these bodies will facilitate community-based planning processes and will thus form

the basis for participatory planning and implementation of project interventions. Through such direct involvement of local communities, greater buy-in will be achieved to promote local-level support of project activities. This will provide communities with opportunities for direct decision-making into the practices to be implemented as well as selection of the areas where these interventions will take place.

**Local Communities:** Local communities will be engaged during the PPG and implementation phases to ensure that community priorities are addressed by the project. Local-level consultations will take place to identify needs, initiate dialogue and promote community buy-in. Local communities will thus participate actively in the design, planning and implementation of proposed project activities. The project will ensure a strong emphasis on gender representation during stakeholder consultations as well as gender-sensitive activities during implementation, including participation of women's shuras and cooperatives.

**Individual land-users and user groups, particularly farmers:** Farmers are primarily reliant on agriculture practices and natural resources (shrub collection, grazing, rainfed cropping) for their livelihoods. The proposed project will engage with land-users – inter alia through Farmer Learning and Resource Centers and Farmers Cooperatives.

**International, National- and local-level CSOs/NGOs:** Several CSOs and NGOs focused on support for rural livelihoods exist in Afghanistan. These include ICARDA, DACAAR, Afghan Aid, Mercy Corps, and members of the Afghan Civil Society Forum. These organizations will be consulted during the PPG phase to identify opportunities for alignment of this project with ongoing initiatives. Such organizations have insights into local socio-economic and environmental priorities related to community needs. Inclusion of CSOs/NGOs in project design will ensure that interventions address real priorities in local communities in a manner that is culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable, as well as avoid duplication and maximize on adaptation benefits.

**Local universities:** Afghanistan's academic institutions host experienced researchers with considerable expertise in agriculture and sustainable land management, particularly at Kabul University and provincial universities/higher education institutes in Samangan, Ghazni, Kunar and Paktya provinces. These specialists will be consulted during the PPG phase as well as during project implementation to ensure that planning and implementation of project interventions are tailored to the specific socio-economic and environmental context of Afghanistan.

**Other UN agencies:** The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) both have strong track record in supporting sustainable agriculture and environmental management practices in Afghanistan. These agencies provide technical support to various ministries and have also facilitated implementation of several GEF projects in the country. Strong coordination during the PPG phase and during implementation will ensure close collaboration to maximize synergies between complementary initiatives.

During the elaboration of the Project Identification Form (PIF), in-depth consultations took place with Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW), Kabul University, Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA), Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), and with UNEP and FAO as Asian

Development Bank (ADB) and with UN agencies active in the relevant fields. Consultations with all the above-mentioned stakeholders captured their support and further assistance in developing the full-fledge project document. The PIF was presented as a new/proposed project concept to the Project Board Meeting of two currently on-going GEF-LDCF projects named as “Climate Change Adaptation Project (CCAP)” and “Climate-induced Disaster Risk Reduction Project (CDRRP)”. The project board meeting endorsed the concept of the PIF and called for its quick submission to GEF-SEC. It is worth mentioning that during the PPG phase further consultations will take place at the provincial and local level in all four selected provinces (Samangan, Kunar, Paktia and Ghazni).

### 3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

**Briefly include below any gender dimensions relevant to the project, and any plans to address gender in project design (e.g. gender analysis).**

Gender equality and women's empowerment have historically proven challenging, with evidence showing that the status of women was undermined during Soviet era and worsened during the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. However, relevant existing laws and regulations, such as - the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and the National Action Plan for Women, both stress the importance of gender-sensitivity in planning and implementation of project activities. The proposed project will, therefore, be designed to ensure women's involvement through women's social associations/shuras as far as possible during PPG preparation and implementation. The project will particularly focus on engaging women in planning and implementation to make sure their priorities are considered. The Directorate of Women's Affairs and Community Development Councils, Farmer Cooperation, Forest Management Committees and Rangeland Management Committees will be actively engaged and consulted for planning project interventions. More importantly, women will be engaged in building capacity, access to information, set targets for women's involvement in activities, focus on gender differences in capabilities to cope with climate change adaptation project and to ensure that risk assessments are informed by gender analysis and any other aspects of gender equality and women empowerment to maximize effectiveness of gender involvement. The total proposed number of direct beneficiaries of the project is 80,000 (20,000 for each province), where 50% of the beneficiaries are women.

**Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment? Yes**

**closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources; Yes**

**improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or Yes**

**generating socio-economic benefits or services for women. Yes**

**Will the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?**

Yes

#### 4. Private sector engagement

**Will there be private sector engagement in the project?**

No

**Please briefly explain the rationale behind your answer.**

We do not expect significant private sector contribution, because currently no private actors are willing to invest in the target areas. If the security situation improves, the project may engage private sector entities – eg. providers of drip irrigation systems and similar equipment or of potential buyers of agricultural products and NTFP. Further consultations and explorations will be conducted during the PPG phase.

## 5. Risks to Achieving Project Objectives

Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the Project objectives from being achieved, and, if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the Project design (table format acceptable)

Risk Category	Risk Description	Mitigation Measure
Safety and Security	<p>Prodd</p> <p>Project Sites in contested areas of the ongoing insurgency may not be fully accessible during the project implementation, delaying or preventing project implementation.</p>	<p>UN-DSS and MOSS procedures will always be followed to ensure safety and security of project staff. The project will follow National Implementation Modality (NIM) and work through local contractors (e.g. NGOs) who have a good track record and are accepted within targeted communities. Strong coordination will be maintained with district and provincial government structures to ensure their support. Project sites will be re-assessed during the project inception phase and project activities moved to more secure districts if necessary. CDCs will be used for implementation as far as possible to promote ownership and reduce security threats to outside staff.</p>
Social and Environmental	<p>Women, youth and minority groups in more conservative communities may be marginalised in their participation in project activities</p>	<p>The project will work through local institutions (women's shuras and cooperatives, CBOs, CSOs, NGOs) to ensure full participation of women, youth and other marginalised groups in decision-making and implementation as far as possible, within culturally acceptable limits. In more conservative communities, separate DRR committees will be established for women and marginalised groups, with clear channels of communication between these and other DRR committees.</p>
Operational	<p>Poor coordination between stakeholders at national and provincial/district levels</p>	<p>Engagement with partners at all levels will commence with sensitisation of relevant roles of all other partners "Project champions" with good relationships with other stakeholders will be identified to facilitate coordination between institutions. Strong coordination will be fostered through both formal and informal engagement with members of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Project Management Unit (PMU) and other partners</p>

Social and Environmental	Extreme climate events may disrupt project activities and/or damage infrastructure	Monitoring of climate variables will always be undertaken to ensure that activities are implemented during periods of low risk. Placement of project activities (e.g. irrigation infrastructure and livelihood activities) will be within areas of low risk.
Organizational	Rapid turnover of staff in relevant institutions may hamper continuity	Established government and other implementation structures will be used to build on existing and familiar processes. Alternative representatives will be identified within all relevant institutions and briefed on project progress at regular intervals
	Socio economic impacts due to delays/impacts in implementation of project activities.	At PPG stage, an assessment will be undertaken on social and economic impacts of ongoing Covid-19 on vulnerable populations, mapping of hotspots and developing potential investment plans for responding to and ensuring income recovery for affected vulnerable populations.  During implementation stage, project activities, especially those relating to climate-resilient livelihoods could be utilized/adjusted to address immediate socio-economic needs of target communities.
	<b>Design Stage:</b> restrictions on travel could limit site visits, including for community consultation, technical surveys and data collection as well as monitoring and evaluation to ensure successful completion of the PPG phase	The PPG team will be provided training on preventive measures and use of safety equipment and social distancing guidelines. The team will work virtually if travel restrictions due to COVID-19 continue to be in place. Together with UNDP, the consultants will use teleconference platforms and online tools to engage stakeholders, discuss priorities, share results and explore next steps.
	<b>Implementation Stage:</b> project implementation could potentially be impacted due to travel restrictions and disruptions in supply chain making it impossible to provide face-to-face trainings and other interactions with counterparts and communities, with a consequent knock-on effect on trust building an	Project staff and relevant stakeholders will be provided preventive training (social distancing, reduced contact, wearing of mask, etc.) and equipment regarding potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.  Approval of the documents in the relevant line ministries will be done through online resources, including through DocuSign, etc.

Social and Environmental (COVID)	<p>d informal knowledge exchange/feedback.</p>	<p>The project team will engage with stakeholders through remote communication means such as phone interviews/calls to identify and provide planning parameters for potential project interventions. Data collection will be supplemented through phone calls, video calls, pictures, videos, and maps.</p> <p>Arrangements for remote work – including for official meetings/community consultations, evaluations, etc., will be built into the implementation process. Internet connectivity will be improved, where possible.</p>
	<p>The availability of co-financing could be affected by shifts in government fiscal priorities and exchange rates.</p>	<p>The project will ensure government commitment for co-finance starting from design stage and secure the same as and when annual work plans are approved by the project Board.</p>
	<p>Disruptions to supply chains and restrictions on movement of goods and services could affect availability of resources required for project implementation.</p>	<p>The project work plans and teams will be built keeping potential disruptions of supply chain in mind – and the project will maximize use of experts in-country Procurement plans and field activity implementation plans will be prepared in advance with specific timelines to avoid potential delays. In this regard, the following mitigation measures will apply:</p> <p><b>Component 1:</b> Training for government officials and community representative will be carried out remotely, aided by multi-media materials and interactive seminars. If permissible and recommended by health authorities, trainings in the communities will be carried out with precautions, supplying trainees with masks and hand sanitisers and complying with social distancing norms. Pre-recorded videos and other multi-media resources could also be used to help reduce the risk of transmission.</p>



	<p><b>Component 2:</b> As most of the work under this component starts with technical surveys and engineering designs, these can be performed by technical staff alone with minimal contact with local communities. Where activities require physical contact with beneficiaries and stakeholders, preventive measures, as recommended by WHO and national health authorities will be strictly adhered to.</p> <p><b>Component 3:</b> Initial tasks under this component (forest maps and information management systems) can be performed using satellite-based software and remote meetings. Activities requiring physical contact with beneficiaries and stakeholders will follow norms prescribed by WHO and national health authorities.</p> <p><b>Component 4:</b> Project M&amp;E and knowledge management will be carried out by project field staff using phone interviews. Field visits will be managed strictly, and safety precautions will be taken at all times. Where physical contact with beneficiaries and stakeholders are required, the project will strictly adhere to prevent safety norms prescribed by WHO and national health authorities.</p>
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**Opportunities due to COVID:**

COVID-19 presents opportunities for the project to function in a more efficient way through enhancement of digital technology and online resources, which will in turn minimize bureaucracy and time taken in securing approvals. The improvements in digital technology and online resources will also allow for project documentation and resources to be stored in a central repository, making it more transparent and easier for stakeholder to access information and documentation.

In the context of Afghanistan, COVID-19 also provides an opportunity for stakeholders and community members to participate in project consultation meetings through remote means, thereby reducing casualties due to frequent security incidences.

The project will aim to ensure sustainable procurement, careful waste management (e.g., of PPE) and save resources through remote/online operations and minimum travel thereby avoiding contribution to POPs and GHG emissions.

The preventive health measures, including awareness and advocacy campaigns will not only improve the health of beneficiary population, but will also have spill-over effects, including reduction of burden on national health care system.

A more detailed risk mitigation strategy, outlining measures and opportunities related to COVID risk will be prepared during the PPG phase.

## 6. Coordination

**Outline the institutional structure of the project including monitoring and evaluation coordination at the project level. Describe possible coordination with other relevant GEF-financed projects and other initiatives.**

**UNDP – GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP):** The proposed project will have close collaboration with the SGP to scale up successful models implemented in the targeted areas. The lessons learned and good practices in supporting communities would be important for the proposed project. SGP grantee partners who are well experienced and qualified would be consulted in the project preparation stage, and they could also be useful in the implementation/scaling up of activities at the grass root level. Special consideration would be given to develop the capacity of local civil society organizations who would be an asset for the future and will ensure project sustainability.

**Support to GEF Eligible Parties for Alignment of National Action Programs and Reporting Process under UNCCD (UNEP):** The proposed project will build on the work of this Enabling Activity by developing capacity for ongoing planning and implementation of priorities detailed under the UNCCD.

**Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Community Forests and Sustainable Biomass Energy (FAO):** The proposed project will draw from lessons learned through implementation of this GEF-funded initiative. In particular, the proposed project will review the community-based natural resource management strategies as well as on-the-ground interventions implemented by this initiative to inform project design and eventual implementation.

**Strengthening the Resilience of Rural Livelihood Options for Afghan Communities in Panjshir, Balkh, Uruzgan and Herat Provinces to Manage Climate Change-induced Disaster Risks:** This project is being implemented to strengthen resilience of rural livelihood options for Afghan communities in Panjshir, Balkh, Uruzgan and Herat Provinces to manage climate change-induced disaster risks. The project is implemented to integrate climate change risk and vulnerability into local planning and budgeting process and to enhance and diversify rural income and livelihood opportunities for vulnerable communities and strengthen and improve irrigation infrastructure. As the proposed project is a continuation of this ongoing project financed under GEF-5, lessons learned from the ongoing project will be used to inform both design – during the PPG phase – and implementation of this proposed project. The proposed project will draw on best practices in terms of community-based approaches to planning and implementation of agriculture, forest and rangeland management. Moreover, the training provided under Component 1 (Outputs 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3) of the GEF-5 ongoing project will build awareness and capacities of local communities, MAIL and NEPA, which will enhance design and implementation of this GEF-7 project. Furthermore, lessons learned from the design and implementation of similar community-based rangeland management plan under GEF-5 (Outputs 5.2 and 5.3) will be used to inform the development of community-based plans during implementation of the GEF-6 project. The GEF-5 project is a foundational project, upon which this proposed GEF-7 project will expand and significantly scale up ecosystem-based management to achieve multiple global environmental benefits.

**Developing Core Capacity for Decentralized MEA Implementation and Natural Resources Management in Afghanistan (UNEP):** The project will build on the work of this initiative related to strengthening of stakeholder's capacities and inter-ministerial coordination for implementation of multi-lateral environmental agreements.

**Community-based Sustainable Land and Forest Management in Afghanistan (FAO, GEF-6):** The proposed project will draw from the lessons learned from stakeholders' involvement and consultations during the project preparation grant, design and implementation phases to best address the bottom up involvement of project beneficiaries. The proposed project will be complementary due to its different geographic scope and thematic focus. Where both projects are active in the same provinces (Ghazni and Paktya), they address different districts and communities.

**GEF ID 9285-Community-based sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan; and GEF ID 4227-Building Adaptive Capacity and Resilience to Climate Change in Afghanistan:** The project document of the proposed LDCF project will be designed based on the lesson learned from GEF ID 9285 and GEF ID 4227 and will have regular coordination meetings with both projects to avoid duplication. Lessons learned from the latter will be used to inform both design – during the PPG phase – and implementation of this proposed project. In particular, the proposed project will draw on best practices in terms of community-based approaches to planning and implementation of natural resource management/SFM. During the implementation of the project, the project managers of GEF ID 9285 and GEF ID 4227 will be the project board members of this project. This project will share all Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs), Annual Progress Reports (APRs) with the mentioned projects for knowledge sharing. The main gap and challenge in the above projects was that when plans were revised by the projects, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation under the Citizen Charter Programme was in the process of revising the Community Development Plans. The proposed LDCF project will fill this gap and will work closely with Citizen Charter to mainstream climate change in the CDCs planning. The proposed LDCF project will also come up with climate change integration toolkit to help MRRD mainstreaming climate change into the community planning process more effectively.

The biggest component of the proposed project is “Sustainable climate responsive livelihoods interventions”. Most of the budget (\$7,521,353 million including 0.5 cash co-finance from UNDP core fund) is allocated to this component. While the project also addresses forestry and sustainable land management issues, they are elements that contribute to the broader objective on climate change adaptation of livelihoods. The livelihoods component is the scaling-up of another LDCF project “Strengthening the resilience of rural livelihood options for Afghan communities” in Panjshir, Balkh, Uruzgan and Herat Provinces to manage climate change-induced disaster risks (PIMS#5098) - being implemented by MAIL through UNDP technical support, that will be finalized by end of 2019. This proposed LDCF project will utilize the design and technical specification developed by the MAIL project (PIMS#5098) for the livelihoods and improved irrigation component of the project.

**Community-based sustainable land and forest management in Afghanistan:** The main objective of this recently approved FAO project is to mitigate impacts of climate change through sustainable land management practices, whereas the objective of the proposed LDCF project is to promote adaptation to adverse impacts of climate change. Regarding geographical area, the proposed project will cover new districts and communities, as the FAO project does not cover all districts of these provinces. Therefore, UNDP will ensure coverage of districts and communities not covered by the FAO project. Regarding forestry related activities, which make up only a minor part of the entire project, there are differences in activities, which make the proposed LDCF project complementary to FAO project. The proposed project includes provincial level forest management planning, forest mapping and information management system establishment and development of community-based forest management. In contrast, the FAO project only assesses the high conservation value forests, information, which will accordingly be integrated in Outputs 3.1. and 3.2 of the proposed LDCF project. The proposed project under this outcome will focus on establishment of community-forestry in selected communities, where such land-use type can be an element of improved climate-resilient livelihoods. In its third output, the FAO

project aims at physical regeneration, rehabilitation and sustainable use of specific forest areas, which are all located in communities that are not targeted under the proposed project. Consequently, the two projects have strong complementarities and will build on such synergies during the lifetime of both projects, without duplicating project activities.

**Adapting Afghan Communities to Climate-Induced Disaster Risks:** The proposed project will draw from the lessons learned from stakeholder's involvement and consultations during the project preparation grant, design and implementation phases to best address the bottom up involvement of the project beneficiaries.

**Establishing integrated models for protected areas and their co-management in Afghanistan (UNDP):** The proposed project will seek complementarities with this initiative during design and implementation, particularly pertaining to strengthening capacity for biodiversity protection, human and wildlife conflict, and implementing community-based natural resource management plans including community-based forestry.

**Building resilience of communities living around the Northern Pistachio Belt and Eastern Forest Complex of Afghanistan through an EBA approach (UNEP):** The proposed project is expected to work in Samangan province in similar geographical locations as this UNEP-led initiative. Consequently, the two projects will be closely coordinated to ensure that there is no duplication of project activities though the proposed project will provide alternative livelihood to reduce human driven pressure on the Pistachio Belt ecosystem. At the same time, synergies and opportunities for collaboration between the projects will be actively pursued.

## 7. Consistency with National Priorities

### Is the Project consistent with the National Strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions

Yes

**If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc**

Afghanistan became a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on 12 June 1992, but ratified it on 19 September 2002. The Kyoto Protocol was ratified on 13 April 2013 and entered into force on 23 June 2013. Afghanistan is a least developed country (LDC) and highly vulnerable to climate change. Afghanistan's NAPA was published in 2009. The proposed project will build the capacity for climate change adaptation planning and implementation by addressing four NAPA priorities that are inter-connected:

NAPA Priority Rank	Activity
1	Improved Water Management and Use Efficiency
5	Improved Food Security
6	Rangeland Management
7	Creation of Off-farm Employment

The link between the proposed LDCF project and the NAPA is centered on a common goal of informing climate resilient development planning and sector management through improved national and local systems that generate better agriculture, livelihoods and food security. The NAPA identifies a number of existing national policy initiatives, sectoral policies, programs and strategies that may directly or indirectly address climate change adaptation. Accordingly, the most important policy and program documents that have relevance to climate change adaptation include the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, Strategic Policy Framework for the Water Sector, Policy and Strategy for the Forestry and Range Management Subsectors, Strategic National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management (NCSA) and National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA).

The National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management (NCSA) and the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) are presented in a joint report that was published in 2009. It is a cross-cutting document that details the capacity constraints, opportunities and targets to address global environmental issues and enhance Afghanistan's capacity to meet its obligations under the Rio Conventions (UNCBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC). As such, this is the guiding document for adaptation within the country, and therefore particularly relevant to this LDCF financed initiative. The project interventions are designed to be aligned with the goals of the NAPA, particularly with regard to the priority NAPA projects of improved water management, irrigation improved infrastructure and climate-resilience livelihoods.

The Strategic National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (SNAP) was issued in 2011. This plan represents a bottom-up approach to developing disaster risk reduction strategies to ensure that Afghanistan is capable of planning for and responding to natural disasters. The baseline capacity for disaster risk reduction (DRR) within Afghanistan is very limited, and several projects have been undertaken to enhance the capacity of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA). The SNAP provided a framework for the development of national DRR structures over the period 2011 to 2015 and seeks to utilize the convergence of DRR and climate change adaptation to promote capacity within ANDMA and to ensure consistency in national plans and programs. It calls for the establishment of a national DRR platform chaired by ANDMA. This LDCF project will build specifically upon strategic objective 5 ('to strengthen community resilience using means to reduce the underlying factors of risk').

The LDCF project will contribute to important aspects of all the above mentioned policies and strategies by improving ecosystem climate resilience, enhancing dryland and irrigated agricultural production despite changes in climate and water regimes, and strengthening national capacity to plan for and overcome the negative impacts of climate change in the country.

This LDCF project is strongly aligned with the Government of Afghanistan's National Priority Programme (NPP) for Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) Cluster. Through the implementation of community-based climate resilience livelihoods intervention, community-based forestation or afforestation, the project supports the following priorities:

- **NPP1** – National Water and Natural Resources Development Programme. The goal of this priority is inter alia to ensure effective utilisation and proper management of natural resources to enhance agricultural productivity.
- **NPP2** – National Comprehensive Agriculture Production and Market Development Programme. The goal of this priority is to improve sustainable agricultural production and productivity.
- **NPP4** – Strengthening Local Institutions Programme. The goal of this priority is to establish productive and participatory partnerships between the government and communities through community-based governance systems.

The proposed LDCF project is aligned with the Afghanistan Sustainable Development Goals (ASDG) namely as below:

**SDG 1: No Poverty** – End poverty in all its forms everywhere. The proposed project will contribute to this goal in two ways. On the one hand, climate change adaptation measures will support livelihood diversification through the promotion of alternative income-generation and value-addition activities to contribute towards more sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation. Secondly, the proposed project will help mainstream climate-induced disaster risks reduction – which will in turn secure past and future development gains and protect millions from falling back into poverty.

**SDG 2:** Zero Hunger – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. The proposed project will support food security and sustainable agriculture through the promotion of climate-resilient agricultural techniques such as climate-resistant crops and improved cultivation practices.

**SDG13:** Climate Action – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. This LDCF proposed project will promote adaptation to climate change impacts. This will be done through reducing the impacts of climate-induced disasters through promoting planning and implementation of disaster risk reduction measures, through promoting climate-resilient livelihoods, agricultural and livelihood practices at the targeted provinces.

The below table explains the linkages of the LDCF project and NPP, Sub-NPPs, A-SDGs, ASDG indicators and ASDG targets:



NPP	Sub-NPPs	A-SDGs	A-SDG indicators	A-SDGs targets
Agricultural and Rural Development	National Water and Natural Resources Development & National Comprehensive Agriculture Production and Market Development	SDG 1: No Poverty	1.5.1: % of population at risk by climate and other disasters  1.5.2: Direct disaster economic loss in relation to gross domestic product (PDP)	1.5 by 2030 build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environment shocks and disaster
		SDG 2: Zero Hunger	2.4.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture  2.5.1 # if registered and protected plant and animal genetic resources	2.4: By 2030 ensure sustainable food production system and implementation resilient agriculture practices that increase productivity and production
		SDG13: Climate Action	13.1.1 Percentage of local disaster risk reduction strategies and action plans development at district and locality levels  13.2.1 Progress towards the establishment of operationalization of integrated policy/strategy and plans which increase Afghanistan ability to adapt to the adverse emplace of climate change	13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural hazards in all countries  13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning  2.5 by 2025, maintain genetic diversity of seeds cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species.

This proposed LDCF proposal is also aligned with Sendai Framework targets and will contribute to achieve the following Sendai Framework priorities:

**Sendai Framework Priority 1** (Understanding disaster risk): This proposed LDCF project will promote the integration of climate-induced disaster risk reduction and climate change into the development planning and budgeting processes. This will be done through the capacity development of decision-makers in the relevant line ministries to integrate DRR and CCA and capacity of local implementors will also be built to implement DRR and CCA intervention on the ground.

DRR and CCA can best be carried out at the landscape level using an Integrated Landscape Management Approach.

**Sendai Framework Priority 4 (Build Back Better):** This programme will support the construction of climate resilience irrigation improved infrastructure and climate resilience livelihoods which are recovery interventions for Build Back Better and can establish a strong linkage between humanitarian and development interventions in the country. The hazards which lead to disasters need to be addressed at the landscape or watershed level and be part of participatory, multi-sector and multi-stakeholder ILM process.

The proposed project is also aligned with the current United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Afghanistan. In particular, the project interventions support UNDAF priority - Sustainable Livelihoods: Agriculture, Food Security and Income Opportunities. The proposed project will contribute towards UNDAF's aim to support "effective implementation of natural resource management systems, including appropriate regulatory frameworks and rehabilitation and restoration initiatives".

#### **Proposed project alignment with UNDP's signature skillset (Six Signature Solution):**

UNDP's six signature solutions represent cross-cutting approaches, each with the potential to unlock the path to sustainable development. The Six Signature Solutions are:

- Keeping people out of poverty
- Governance for peaceful, just, and inclusive societies
- Crisis prevention and increased resilience
- Environment: nature-based solutions for development
- Clean, affordable energy
- Women's empowerment and gender equality

As the Solution with the closest and most obvious connection with the focus areas of this LDCF proposed project, Solution Four (Environment: nature-based solutions for development) has a strong focus on healthy ecosystems for improved climate change and disaster resilience but also to preserve and restore biodiversity. Solution Five (Clean, affordable energy), though largely focused on climate change mitigation has adaptation implications as well. Considering the climate-induced melting snowcaps and changes in precipitation adaptation of other renewable energy sources than just water will be necessary. Further alignments with this proposed LDCF project can be found in all other Solutions, with varying intensity. Solution One (Keeping people out of poverty) connects through both, the DRR and CCA lens. Considering that disasters in an instance can push a large number of people back into poverty by stripping them of their livelihoods but also that their livelihood depends in large parts on ecosystem services endangered by climate change in the first place is indicating strong alignment with this solution. Reducing risk and building resilience in general, including but not limited to disasters, is the aim of Solution Three (Crisis prevention and increased resilience). As risk is multidimensional, the solution is, among others, mentioning capacity building in anticipation and absorption

connecting to our focus on early warning systems and preparedness for disaster risk reduction as well as climate change adaptation in terms of resilient and healthy ecosystems. The above mentioned multidimensional nature of risk is also reflected in Solution Six (Women`s empowerment and gender equality) as women often face increased exposure to hazards due to their role in the family and the connected amount of time spent at home, increasing the change of suffering casualties during earthquakes, landslides or other disasters. And finally, Solution Two (Governance for peaceful, just and inclusive societies), considering the state of gender equality and inclusive democratic processes has multiple alignments with climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, as large groups of people will have to come to consensus over scarce resources, land-use change and appropriate education on CCA and DRR).

## 8. Knowledge Management

**Outline the Knowledge management approach for the Project, including, if any, plans for the Project to learn from other relevant Projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.**

Knowledge management is one of the main aims of Component 4 that includes: (i) documentation of processes, best practices, lessons learnt, and impact stories describing the theory of change; (ii) knowledge dissemination products that include production of sustainable forest management and sustainable livelihoods interventions guides, learning/training modules, policy briefs, technical notes, and learning events for communities, students, local government officials, and subject-area practitioners, etc. Knowledge and information generated through the project will be used for adaptive management during project implementation, as well as used to guide development planning and implementation of other initiatives at the community level.

The project will collect and share best practices with other partners such as UN agencies (FAO, WFP, OCHA) and relevant line ministries such as Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), Ministry of Women Affairs (MoFA) and Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW). The best practices of the project will also be disseminated to local communities. For example, the best practices of one province will be shared with other provinces during the project implementation through project cross visits between provinces where GEF projects from UNDP and other implementing partners (UNEP and FAO) are being implemented. Furthermore, best practice guidelines on climate resilience livelihoods projects – drawing from examples elsewhere in Afghanistan as well as internationally – will be developed and disseminated to local communities. These will focus on aspects of management of natural resources that ensure long-term sustainability of these resources while at the same time supporting community livelihoods. These guidelines will have a specific focus on techniques for forest rehabilitation/restoration through assisted natural regeneration and similar activities as well as best practices rangeland rehabilitation and management. These best practices and lessons learned will be collated, synthesized and packaged to provide information that is tailored to Afghanistan's social and environmental context

The project will incorporate lessons from other relevant projects and initiatives through systematic analysis of available documentation with regard to approaches, technologies, challenges, ways of addressing these as well as resulting successes and failures. The project will arrange on-site exchange visits in areas of ongoing and recently implemented projects with participation of project staff, national, provincial and local level stakeholders, including community representatives.

The lessons learned and best practices from this project and other initiatives will be collated and communicated through platforms such as Conference of Parties (COP) and other regional knowledge-sharing opportunities. Not only will this promote upscaling of project activities in other countries within the region, but it may also catalyze further investments for scaling up project activities at the national level. Lessons learned will be presented in the form of detailed documentation of benefits of diversifying community livelihoods to build climate resilience, with a focus on successes of empowering women and youth in participating in livelihood activities.

User-friendliness of documentations and information sharing materials will be achieved through the adaptation of all materials to various target audiences in terms of content, used media (including video, print materials with instructive illustrations), style and language.

**9. Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Risks**

Provide information on the identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project/program based on your organization's ESS systems and procedures

**Overall Project/Program Risk Classification\***

PIF                                      CEO Endorsement/Approval    MTR                                      TE

Medium/Moderate

**Measures to address identified risks and impacts**

Provide preliminary information on the types and levels of risk classifications/ratings of any identified environmental and social risks and potential impacts associated with the project (considering the GEF ESS Minimum Standards) and describe measures to address these risks during the project design.

**Supporting Documents**

Upload available ESS supporting documents.

Title                                      Submitted

6406-UNDP AFG - Pre-SESP



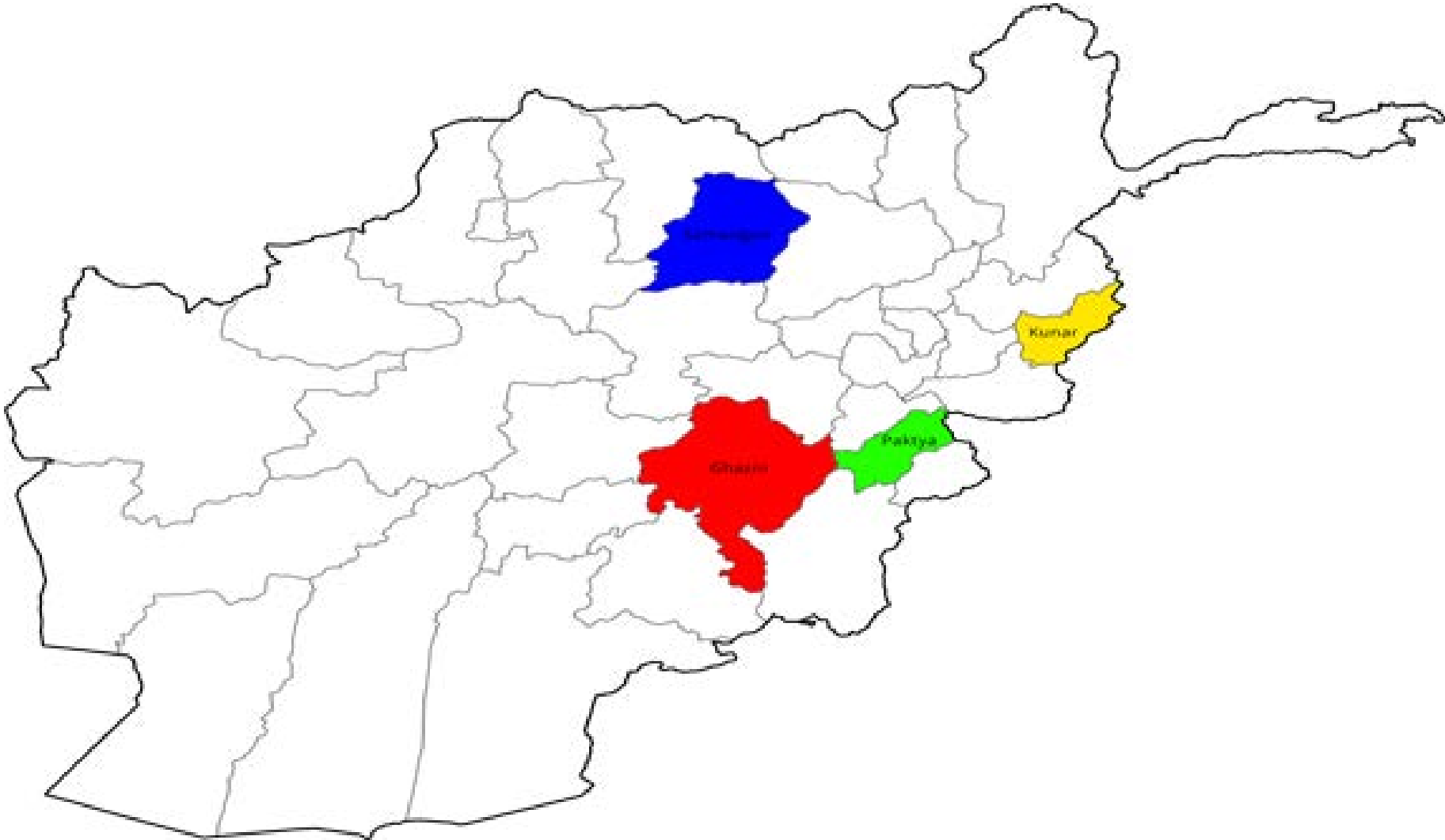
**Part III: Approval/Endorsement By GEF Operational Focal Point(S) And Gef Agency(ies)**

**A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter with this template).**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Date</b>
Schah Zaman Maiwandi	Director General	NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY	12/11/2019

**ANNEX A: Project Map and Geographic Coordinates**

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project intervention takes place







Islamic Republic of Afghanistan  
Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)  
Afghanistan Forest Map

