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of the project
“Adapting Agriculture
to Climate Change in
the Gambia”



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Terminal evaluation of the project
“Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change
in the Gambia”

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Abstract

This report presents the key findings, conclusions and recommendations from the terminal evaluation of the project “Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia” (GCP/GAM/033/LDF). This project was funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government of the Gambia. The project was implemented in the Gambia from December 2016 to October 2023 after a series of extensions. The evaluation followed the provided terms of reference.

The evaluation approach involved qualitative methods: desk reviews; key informant interviews (KIIs); focus group discussions (FDGs); and field visits. These methods assessed the extent to which the project achieved its intended results. A stratified random sampling method was guided by key criteria. Community size and the intensity of key activities informed the data collection process. Gender-disaggregated data were collected and analysed to assess the degree to which women were involved with and benefitted from the project.

The evaluation found the project to be relevant. It aligned with the Gambia’s National Development Plan, its forestry policy and strategy, and its climate change policy and strategy. The project was also relevant and aligned with the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) and development assistance framework, the GEF portfolio and most of the GEF core indicators. The project addressed the impact of climate change and variability. In fact, it improved livelihoods, enhanced good governance and provided sound environmental management. It also tackled the needs and priorities of the target population. This holds true for female vegetable growers and livestock farmers. Their nutritional status and income earning capacity increased while farmer-herder conflict decreased.

This report is to be used by FAO, the GEF and the Government of the Gambia alongside relevant technical departments and institutions such as the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock Services and the National Research Institute (NARI). Equally, the report will be of great importance to the civil society organizations that were involved in project implementation.

Despite the challenges of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and cumbersome procurement processes, the project achieved remarkable success. In fact, it built capacities among implementing partner institutions, civil society organizations and farmer-based organizations. It also supported the establishment of vegetable gardens for greater income and better food security among the beneficiary communities. The planned animal drinking points, if successfully implemented, will facilitate the watering of animals and lead to greater production and productivity. Other plans like beekeeping, poultry and small ruminants will also generate more income among beneficiaries. An improved lab and staff training makes the National Environment Agency (NEA) poised to address climate change.

Considering the Gambia’s vulnerability to climate change and variability, the evaluation recommends either a second phase of the project or a continuation through a new project. This request has been repeated by beneficiaries across all regions, especially women. Indeed, this demographic bears the brunt of climate change and variability. A project extension will further consolidate gains and expand into other deprived regions like West Coast, Lower River, Central River, south and Upper River, south. The report also recommends a more direct role from the implementing partners as procuring units for future projects of a similar nature in the Gambia.

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Abbreviations

CPF	Country Programming Framework
ESS	environmental and social safeguards
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer Field School
FGD	focus group discussion
FLO	Funding Liaison Officer
GAP	good agricultural practice
GEF	Global Environment Facility
KII	key informant interview
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
LsEbA	Large-scale Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Gambia River Basin
LTO	Lead Technical Officer
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MTR	mid-term review
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency
NEA	National Environment Agency
NTAT	National Technical Advisory Team
PIR	Programme Implementation Report
PPR	project progress report
ROOTS	Resilience of Organizations for Transformative Smallholder Agriculture Project
RTAT	Regional Technical Advisory Team
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SHARP+	Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of Climate Resilience of Farmers and Pastoralists
SSI	semi-structured interview
TOC	theory of change

Map of the Gambia



Source: FAO. 2016. *Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia – Project document*. Rome. Map conforms to UN Geospatial. 2018. *Map of the Gambia*. New York, United States of America. <https://www.un.org/geospatial/content/gambia>

Executive summary

Introduction

1. The evaluation of the project “Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia” (GCP/GAM/033/LDF) was held from 21 November to 1 December 2022. The project was then extended until October 2023. The evaluation was commissioned by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and conducted by two national consultants. It had the dual purpose of accountability and learning. The evaluation covered the project’s interventions. These were implemented through the project’s components in the ten selected districts across three the regions in the Gambia: North Bank; Central River, north; and Upper River, north. The evaluation focused on implementation following the mid-term review (MTR) but was comprehensive of the entire project implementation.
2. The project’s implementing partners include the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock Services, the National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI), the National Environment Agency (NEA) and the Department of Water Resources. Originally, the total project financing from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) was USD 6 288 356 with an additional co-financing of USD 36 830 000 and an expected four-year implementation period from June 2016 to May 2020. The project received no-cost extensions due to implementation challenges and delays. This extended the project’s implementation period by six and a half years. When the evaluation began, the project was supposed to end in December 2022. During the evaluation, it was then expected to end in June 2023 until it was finally extended until October 2023.
3. The evaluation was conducted under the FAO Regional Office for Africa as a decentralized evaluation based on the FAO Office of Evaluation and the GEF. It aimed to obtain an independent assessment of the planned inputs and their contribution to achieving the intended results. It also sought to examine achievements and identify barriers and challenges to implementation and determinants for success or failure. The evaluation also examined broader results and impacts – positive or negative, intended or unintended – to inform and improve the implementation of similar projects in the future.
4. The extensions limited the Evaluation Team’s ability to cover the project in a comprehensive way. Data collection took place in the field in 2022 as planned, but certain results from 2023 could not be captured. To mitigate this, the evaluation integrated the last project progress reports (PPRs) to update relevant sections. While every effort was made to ensure that all project achievements were included, these extensions led to certain achievements being implemented outside of the evaluation timeframe.
5. On its methodological approach, the evaluation adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group’s norms and standards (UNEG, 2005) and aligned with FAO’s evaluation manual (FAO, 2015) and methodological guidelines and practices. It also presented the updated GEF guidelines on co-financing (GEF, 2018). Furthermore, the evaluation followed a theory of change (TOC) approach with an emphasis on the results chain. It addressed key questions based on the GEF policy and evaluation criteria (see Table 2).

Findings of the evaluation

Relevance

6. The project was quite congruent with country priorities, the GEF operational programme strategies and the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF). The project design was relevant. In fact, it met the needs of target beneficiaries and aligned with the country's context and key national, regional and international policy documents. The project was further informed by the last MTR findings and related recommendations towards making necessary implementation adjustments. There was a change in some initially planned activities due to inadequate funding and some shifts in needs and priorities.
7. From the implementing partner perspective, there was a preference for letters of agreement over concept notes. There was also a request for the involvement of implementing partners and communities in procurement and earlier development in the exit strategy. The project formulation was inclusive in that the design process and the selection of intervention areas, stakeholders and beneficiaries were very participatory. Community members and relevant key stakeholders and institutions at the regional and national level were consulted at the design stage and during site identification, the selection of beneficiaries and the actual implementation process.

Effectiveness and progress towards impact

8. The capacities of the project's targeted individuals and organizations increased moderately. These beneficiaries use their new knowledge, equipment, and tools to respond to climate change. In fact, climate change priorities were integrated into national policies, strategies, and plans. Technical support was also provided to facilitate the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). Despite progress, weaknesses and shortcomings still prevented or reduced the government's full capacity at individual, organizational, institutional, and enabling environment levels to mainstream climate change adaptation into its strategies, programmes, practices, and actions.
9. The project was somewhat ineffective in terms of the livestock component. This is because several activities had barely started or were in the process of completion. Vegetable garden support made significant progress in building community resilience, but this needs further expansion and support in terms of value-added activities and enhancing other value chain nodes through marketing. There was significant progress under Component 1 on the revision of institutional and regulatory frameworks that will contribute to the delivery of the overall project objectives when fully accomplished.
10. To some extent, agroclimatic monitoring and the dissemination of climate information was quite effective. This built resilience among the farming communities. Targeted vulnerable households and communities received sufficient diverse and combined support from the project. This helped to secure their livelihoods. It also brought more training and knowledge on agricultural practices, climate-smart farming and sustainable cropping systems.
11. Although key activities and interventions under the livestock component were well articulated and could have made a big difference, for example, on reduced conflict due to the demarcation of stock routes, major setbacks overshadowed and limited their impact.

The robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system disseminated project knowledge and promoted visibility.

Results and intended impact

12. The project moderately contributed to lessening climate change vulnerability within the agriculture and livestock sectors. Despite good community poultry and livestock initiatives, these still need to yield the expected impact due to a myriad of pending activities.
13. The gardens built the resilience of female vegetable growers and their families. This led to improved livelihoods and social cohesion. A significant amount of income was generated from the vegetable gardens. This led to women's economic and social empowerment. In fact, this contrasted with livestock improvement, which was not quite operational. Greater knowledge on and more skills in climate change adaptation and the existing income generation potential from vegetable gardens built community resilience.
14. Community institutions and structures were strengthened and awareness was generated on climate change and its impact vis-à-vis the need for resilience building. These aspects complemented the key project interventions of vegetable gardens and livestock plans, contributing to the project's overall impact. The strengthening of policy and regulatory frameworks alongside capacity building initiatives (technical, material, financial support) for the implementing partners and the communities are good foundations towards the project's long-term impact.
15. The participatory nature of the project design and implementation mechanisms contributed to effective deliveries and long-term impact. FAO's involvement in the project raised its profile, as well as strengthened collaboration and commitment among FAO, key stakeholders and the communities. This enhanced institutional capacity at both the implementing partner and the community level.
16. Of note are potential risk factors: the ability, commitment and willingness of the implementing partners to take on their designated roles and responsibilities as outlined in the exit strategy; and the ultimate accomplishment of pending activities before project closure.

Efficiency

17. The project was implemented efficiently and cost-effectively by following stringent procurement rules and adopting cost-effective measures. Nonetheless, drawn out procurement processes delayed implementation. The promotion of community involvement in project activities was an efficient model, but FAO took on the procurement process with little involvement from the implementing partners and the communities. This slowed down the process and created future monitoring and supervision problems for the implementing partners and the communities.
18. The project management team and the project steering committee were proactive in making strategic decisions to ensure quality delivery and better performance. Apart from the GEF forestry project (GCP/GAM/031/GFF), the Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia project did not engage with other climate change-related initiatives or forge partnerships in this direction.

Sustainability

19. Although the supported vegetable gardens were the most impactful project interventions, the lack of market access (linkages, transport, value-added activities, warehouses) could delay their economic potential. Nevertheless, risk mitigation strategies were employed by the project to ensure sustainability. Some strategies have yet to be fully realized. The project built on gains made at the country level, particularly on institutional strengthening at the community and national level. This, however, must be expanded to ensure sustainability.

Factors affecting performance

20. Despite delays in activity implementation, FAO satisfactorily delivered different stages in the project cycle – from identification to oversight and supervision. The delays were mainly due to slow procurement processes. Project-associated risks were identified on time and effectively managed by staff from the FAO Country Office, the FAO Regional Office for Africa, the project steering committee and the project management team due to their constant and regular oversight and supervision.
21. Responsibilities were delineated among the implementing partners so that each could deliver on their mandate. This, however, was not done in a complementary manner. Rather, it happened in isolation and became a missed opportunity for providing a holistic view of project performance and ensuring mutual backup support for sustainability. Key challenges that led to project implementation delays included a late start and the protracted nature of the procurement process for some planned activities. In addition, marketing and storage constraints for female vegetable growers and the single sourcing of a contractor for some civil engineering work also had a negative impact on project performance. The involvement of the implementing partners and the communities in the procurement process was sought, as well as the proper activation of co-financing arrangements and the timely development of an exit strategy.

Execution

22. FAO, as the executing agency, effectively discharged its roles and responsibilities in the management and administration of the project by quickly identifying and addressing challenges as they emerged. However, to a certain extent, FAO was seen to be stepping into the domains of the implementing partners instead of solely focusing on its fiduciary role. Rather, FAO could have encouraged joint programming between and among implementing partners. The slow procurement processes and FAO's direct involvement in implementation impacted the ability of the implementing partners and the communities to effectively and efficiently discharge their roles and responsibilities in the most optimal way.

Monitoring and evaluation system

23. The M&E plan and system was sufficient. It was implemented based on the collected project information, analysed and disseminated appropriately. This helped to make informed decisions and facilitate continuous learning. However, delays in submitting reports on behalf of the implementing partners were among the key weaknesses.

Financial management and co-financing

24. The project's co-financing arrangements were not on track. Most of the potential co-financers were phased upon project start, which was partly due to initial delays.

Project partnership and stakeholder engagement

25. Apart from the implementing partners, two civil society organizations, community groups and private-sector contractors were involved in both the design and implementation of project activities. However, as stated in other findings, FAO could have focused more on its fiduciary role while providing technical support and advice to other stakeholders in implementing the planned activities. The exit strategy could have been effectively activated as a vehicle to enhance this process.

Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products

26. Communications and knowledge management was enhanced through the development and operationalization of a communications strategy. Knowledge products were developed and disseminated through various channels.

Environmental and social safeguards

27. An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) was conducted during the design phase. Environmental and social safeguards (ESS) were given due consideration throughout implementation.

Gender

28. Gender considerations were taken into account from design to implementation. In fact, women and youth were highly involved in decision-making and taking on leadership roles at the project and household level, benefitting from the project's deliverables. However, the involvement of people with disabilities was not emphasized enough throughout the entire project.

Lessons learned

29. The way in which procurement processes were implemented to ensure due diligence impacted the rate of implementation. Working through community and national structures while strengthening such structures would facilitate project implementation and lead to more effective deliveries and knowledge management.
30. The project's late start, the initial, unintegrated nature of implementing various project components and drawn-out procurement processes were major challenges.
31. There should be strategies to enhance the effective operationalization of the exit strategy. This involves expediting the implementation of pending activities and strengthening the implementing partners and the communities to take on their designated roles and responsibilities. This is paramount for project sustainability.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1. *Relevance*: the project design was relevant. It was designed to meet the needs of the target beneficiaries and aligned with the country's context, as well as key national, regional and international policy documents.

Conclusion 2. *Effectiveness*: the project made significant progress towards the realization of the planned outputs and outcomes.

Conclusion 3. *Efficiency and implementation*: the protracted nature of the procurement processes negatively impacted the rate of implementation, both in terms of timeliness and budget adequacy.

Conclusion 4. *Sustainability*: the unavailability of markets, warehouses and cold storage facilities for garden produce is a key risk. This impacts the project's economic benefits.

Conclusion 5. *Execution*: the project was duly and diligently executed by the FAO project team in collaboration with the implementing partners and the communities. There was effective support and oversight from the Funding Liaison Officer (FLO), the Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and the FAO Country Office.

Conclusion 6. *M&E*: the project's M&E plan and system were in place and operational.

Conclusion 7. *Financial management and co-financing*: there was low performance in the co-financing arrangements. A thorough review and engagement during the delayed project start could have avoided this.

Conclusion 8. *Partnership and stakeholder engagement*: apart from the GEF forestry project (GCP/GAM/031/GFF) and the implementing partners, there were no indications that the project worked in consultation with other projects or institutions. This includes, for example, the Resilience of Organizations for Transformative Smallholder Agriculture Project (ROOTS) from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Large-scale Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Gambia River Basin (LsEbA) project from the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources. Such collaboration would have built synergies and complementarities that could have avoided the duplication of efforts and resources.

Conclusion 9. *Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products*: a significant number of communications and knowledge management products were generated and disseminated. This aspect raised awareness on the project and the commitment to build resilience against climate change and variability.

Conclusion 10. *Gender*: economic empowerment boosted women's agency at the project intervention sites. Indeed, they took on leadership roles and effectively participated in decision-making processes at the household and community level.

Conclusion 11. *Progress towards impact*: the project significantly impacted livelihoods, especially at sites with vegetable gardens.

Conclusion 12. *Lessons learned*: effective sensitization and awareness creation on climate change and variability alongside timely and sufficient project support (technical, material, financial) increases the adaptive capacities of farm families.

Conclusion 13. Although the exit strategy was developed and validated with a clear delineation of activities, roles and responsibilities, its implementation cannot be guaranteed after project closure.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. *Relevance:* it would be prudent to seek a second project phase or a continuation through a new project. This is due to the magnitude of climate change vulnerability in the country and the fact it this affects other regions. There is also a need to build more resilience in the communities.

Recommendation 2. *Effectiveness:* although the intensive scrutiny embedded within the FAO procurement cycle is to ensure efficiency and quality delivery, this process needs to be reviewed so that it can provide more effective strategies at all levels (FAO headquarters, FAO in the Gambia, project management team, implementing partners) to help expedite the process. In particular, there should be a more direct role on behalf of the implementing partners as procuring units for future projects of a similar nature.

Recommendation 3. *Efficiency:* the formation and registration of community garden groups into cooperatives is vital. Moreover, supporting them through business plans alongside the planned convergence of producers and vendors enhances the aggregation and sale of garden produce. This is critical for the sustainability of these initiatives.

Recommendation 4. *Sustainability:* a stakeholder convergence should be organized upon project closure to further reactivate and roll out the exit strategy. This should include an accompanying action plan. It also needs to engage and prepare the respective implementing partners and communities so that they can eventually take on any ongoing or pending project interventions. The project team, FAO, the implementing partners and the communities are key in ensuring the continuity of the initiated interventions. FAO should take on this responsibility before project closure.

Recommendation 5.1. *Factors affecting performance (implementation):* strategies should be put in place to expedite the procurement processes. This involves the full involvement of and consultation with the implementing partners and the communities.

Recommendation 5.2. *Factors affecting performance (execution):* FAO's project execution and oversight role (FAO Country Office, FLO, LTO, project staff) should be further strengthened to ensure the effective delivery of any ongoing or pending interventions. At the same time, FAO should ensure a proper and effective hand over to the relevant implementing partners and the communities for sustainability.

Recommendation 5.3. *Factors affecting performance (M&E):* there is need for regular and continuous follow up with the implementing partners to ensure timely and quality reporting. The organization of review, reflection and feedback sessions for both the implementing partners and the communities on the status of project interventions, key challenges, lessons learned and a way forward would reinvigorate interest and commitment while fulfilling project and institutional accountability requirements.

Recommendation 5.4. *Factors affecting performance (financial management and co-financing):* there is need for effective follow up by the project implementation team on co-financers that have yet to complete their co-financing promises or agreements. In particular, this involves the government and other projects that are currently in progress. The project management team should follow up on this immediately.

Recommendation 5.5. *Partnership and stakeholder engagement:* there is a need for more engagement and reorientation around the exit strategy. This involves technical, material and financial support for both the implementing partners and the communities to ensure a smooth

transition of the interventions after project closure. The project management team should take on this role and implement it immediately.

Recommendation 5.6. *Communications, knowledge management and products:* key knowledge products like documentaries, newsletters and publications should be translated into local languages for wider learning and sharing. A recognition of community champions in building resilience to climate change and variability should be identified, selected, supported and guided to further educate and entice other farmers to follow. This would support wider replication and gains in scaling up that were made through the project interventions.

Recommendation 6. *ESS:* there is need for more training, field visits and study tours for the implementing partners and the communities. This should cover relevant areas such as climate-resilient sustainable agriculture, integrated livestock farming, the selection of climate-resilient crop species, good agricultural practices (GAP) and marketing arrangements. The project management team should work on this in the medium term.

Recommendation 7. *Gender:* continue empowering women and youth to take the lead in the project initiatives and decision-making processes that affect their lives and livelihoods. The involvement of and support for people with disabilities is crucial in recognizing and promoting equal rights while building resilience against the effects of climate change and variability.

Recommendation 8. *Progress towards impact:* the smooth and timely completion of pending and ongoing project interventions and the development and implementation of concrete action plans for activating the exit strategy would go a long way in ensuring sustainability. This should be taken on by FAO and the project management team in the short term.

Recommendation 9. *Lessons learned:* the project management team needs to flesh out key lessons learned during project execution. It should then compile and use these to further strengthen or devise new strategies towards ensuring effective, timely and informed decision-making either during or after the project's phase out period. This work should be done immediately.

Executive summary table 1. The GEF evaluation criteria rating table

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
A1. Overall strategic relevance	S	The project was clearly appropriate. It aligned with all of the relevant policies, the GEF and FAO strategic frameworks and mechanisms, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (1, 2, 5, 12 and 13), and national development plans and priorities in building farmer resilience to climate change through appropriate adaptation measures and practices.
A1.1 Alignment with the GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS	The project perfectly aligned with both the GEF and FAO country strategic frameworks and objectives.
A1.2 Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS	The project addressed agriculture and natural resources policies and action plans (forestry and climate change), the Paris Agreement, and the National Adaptation Programme of Action on Climate Change.
A1.3 Complementarity with existing interventions	HS	The project collaborated with similar donor-funded projects, complementing governmental efforts to enhance climate resilience for improved and sustained food production and productivity. The project was linked to an FAO–GEF forestry project, two FAO–European Union projects on agriculture and food fortification, and a United Nations peacebuilding project. Other projects like ROOTS under the Ministry of Agriculture supported community gardens through crop and vegetable seeds, and the Gambia Inclusive and Resilient Agricultural Value Chain Development Project supported rice production. The LsEbA project also intervened to establish stock routes and natural resources enterprises.
B. EFFECTIVENESS		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MS	Despite many challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic and cumbersome procurement processes, the project achieved remarkable success. Overall, it built the capacities of the implementing partner institutions, the civil society organizations (CSOs) and the farmer-based organizations. The establishment of ten vegetable gardens created income generation opportunities for the beneficiary communities and contributed to food and nutrition security. The establishment of the stock routes and the signing of local conventions improved rangeland management and reduced farmer–herder conflict. The provision of animal drinking points (in progress) will boost production and productivity. Other plans like beekeeping, poultry and small ruminants (all in progress) will go a long way in increasing beneficiary income generation capacities.
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	MS	The project had mixed results on activity implementation. All of the planned vegetable gardens were established with solar-powered reticulation systems for easy access to water. The planned stock routes were established (the erecting of boundary pillars is in progress) and local conventions were signed. Boreholes for all of the planned cattle drinking points were drilled but still need to be fitted with water reticulation systems (elevated water tanks, solar power, drinking troughs). The broilers, beekeeping and small ruminant activities were developed but are not fully operational. The rehabilitation of the Kuntaur Fula Kunda rice fields have yet to materialize, even though initial surveys and the design of the fields were done.
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes ¹ and project objectives	S	Overall, the project built partner institution and community structure capacity. In addition, it enhanced information sharing on the weather and climate-related issues. It contributed to women’s economic empowerment and promoted their agency. Further, the project strengthened unity and social cohesion within partner communities. As an added benefit, it improved access to water

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
		across the intervention regions for production, animal watering and domestic purposes.
- Outcome 1.1 Adaptive capacity of institutions strengthened and climate change adaptation priorities mainstreamed into sectoral policies and plans	S	The project conducted relevant, adaptive capacity building initiatives for various stakeholders on key thematic areas to mainstream climate change and gender into policies and to enhance the resilience of the sector against climate change threats. Specifically, it supported the development of the National Early Warning Strategy under the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA). The NEA lab upgrade and staff training position the agency to address climate change. It, however, needs to be supported in order to enhance full-fledged operations. Institutions like NARI, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock Services and project intervention communities also benefited from capacity building programmes (study tours, exchange visits, trainings) to enhance their institutional and organizational capacities.
Outcome 2.1 Increased knowledge on and understanding of vulnerability and risk assessment tools, agroclimatic monitoring and climate information services for food security by national and local institutions	MS	Under this component, the farming communities were able to access real-time information on weather and climate-related issues to inform their farming calendars. Trainings on vulnerability and risk assessment increased the knowledge of staff and key partners (Planning Services Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture, NDMA, Department of Agriculture, Department of Livestock Services, Department of Water Resources, NARI, Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency) in these vital areas and further support their preparation for climate uncertainties.
Outcome 3.1 Integrated climate-resilient strategies for diversified livelihoods strengthened or introduced, and sources of income improved for vulnerable households and communities	MS	The project created adaptation strategies and options, including the establishment of community gardens, stock routes, beekeeping, broiler, cockerel and small ruminant activities. Income from the vegetable gardens contributed immensely to women's economic empowerment and addressed household needs (school, health, food, clothing and miscellaneous expenses). However, the other income generation plans need to mature.
Outcome 3.2 Strengthened climate-resilient livelihoods of target populations by promoting sustainable crop intensification and innovative crop improvement and management practices	MU	In collaboration with NARI, the project provided drought-tolerant crop varieties (cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato, findi, cowpea, rice) for multiplication. The multiplication of these improved varieties has yet to be seen, but it may promote diversification and the intensification of production activities towards building resilience to climate change and variability. In addition, the rehabilitation of the Kuntaur rice has yet to see results. Regardless, this could boost rice production in the targeted cluster communities. This is important since the communities largely rely on this area for their lives and livelihoods.
Outcome 4.1 Improved rangeland management and increased access to livelihood assets in order to sustain income sources by livestock-dependent communities	MU	The project made strides to improve rangeland management for better livestock production and productivity in the intervention communities. However, progress was limited as only six stock routes were established and nine boreholes were drilled, pending completion of the accessories (elevated water tanks, solar-powered water reticulation system, drinking troughs), intensive feed gardens and deferred grazing areas.
Outcome 5.1 Project implemented with a results-based management framework, and good practices and lessons learned disseminated widely	S	An M&E plan and system were established during the last two years (post MTR) to enhance the tracking of project indicators for timely decision-making and the documentation of achievements. The project could document and disseminate success stories, convey lessons learned, and create factsheets, newsletters, billboards and documentaries. The project steering committee, the National Technical Advisory Team (NTAT) and the Regional Technical Advisory Team (RTAT) were established to backstop monitoring

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
		activities. However, only the project steering committee was moderately active in this regard.
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/outcomes	MS	Overall, the project built partner institution and community structure capacities. In addition, it enhanced information sharing on the weather and climate-related issues. It contributed to women's economic empowerment and promoted the agency of women. Furthermore, the project intervention strengthened unity and social cohesion within partner communities. As an added benefit, it also improved access to water across the intervention regions for production, animal watering and domestic purposes. The documentation and dissemination of information on project progress, achievements, challenges and lessons learned were enhanced.
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	MS	The project significantly impacted the lives and livelihoods of the beneficiaries of the community gardens by raising their income generation capacities, supporting their ability to address household needs and promoting unity and social cohesion. These aspects built their resilience to climate change and variability. There was an improvement in strengthening institutional capacities at the national and local levels. This, in addition to the knowledge, skills and experience gained, also built resilience at the national and local levels. Further, significant impact can be made upon completion of the pending activities under the livestock and crop components.
C. EFFICIENCY		
C1. Efficiency ⁱⁱ	S	The project reached 73 percent disbursement as per the June 2022 Programme Implementation Report (PIR). The establishment of vegetable gardens with solar-powered water reticulation systems reduced drudgery for women. The time gained is used by women in other production and community roles. The dispatch of Songhai graduates, extension staff and Farmer Field School members for the vegetable gardens brought extension services to the doorsteps of the communities at minimal cost. The protracted nature of procurement processes impacted the rate of implementation to a great extent in terms of timelines and the inadequacy of budgets. This was due to the high frequency of price changes that stemmed from volatile economic trends. Ensuring synergy between various project components, as observed in the MTR, also contributed to efficiency. In particular, this brought the livestock component on board, which had lagged during the first half of the project. The decision to rehabilitate Kuntaur rice fields (83 ha) instead of implementing the initial plan to develop 40 ha in the Wassu rice fields cut costs, even though this still needs to start effectively.
D. SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	ML	The risk to long-term sustainability is very low. The project developed an exit strategy with the participation of the government, the implementing partners, other similar projects and the beneficiaries to create the sustainable continuity of project results. However, the actual transfer of planned activities in the exit strategy to sectoral plans and budgets of the implementing partners is not guaranteed.
D1.1 Financial risks	ML	The commitment of the implementing partners to incorporate activities into their budget lines upon project closure is not guaranteed due to existing budgetary constraints. However, there are opportunities for other current projects to take on such activities

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
		with proper negotiation (ROOTS, the LsEbA project, Gambia Inclusive and Resilient Agricultural Value Chain Development Project). In addition, beneficiary communities also set up measures to ensure the availability of funds beyond the project's lifetime (opening of bank accounts, levying of service fees, membership contributions).
D1.2 Sociopolitical risks	L	These risks are very low. In fact, stakeholder expectations have gone up due to the project achievements and the anticipated impacts. The signing of local conventions reduces farmer–herder conflict risk.
D1.3 Institutional and governance risks	ML	The governance structures at the national and community levels provide an avenue for organizing and implementing project activities with the required guidance, management and support.
D1.4 Environmental risks	L	An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment was conducted. This guaranteed fewer risks, if any. In addition, all of the vegetable gardens practice organic farming, which maintains a balanced ecosystem and biodiversity.
D2. Catalysis and replication	L	The project is a catalyst for scale-up and replication, especially for the GEF-8 cycle.
E. FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE		
E1. Project design and readiness ⁱⁱⁱ	MS	The project followed a participatory design approach with thorough identification of stakeholders at the national and regional levels. Expected roles and responsibilities were defined in the preparatory phase with the priorities and perspectives of local communities and women reflected in the project document. Key staff, including the Project Coordinator, contributed to the project's effectiveness and readiness to kick-start operations. In addition, the project steering committee was established and participated in consultative meetings at decentralized levels to ensure beneficiary acceptance and ownership. The project, however, lacked a theory of change at the design stage, which was supposed to provide linkages among the resources, outputs, outcomes/impacts and project goals. Similarly, the project time frame was considerably short given the number of no-cost extensions required to successfully implement its activities.
E2. Quality of project implementation	MS	The Project Management Unit was established and operational. The project's implementing partners were identified and their respective letters of agreement were signed and operational. Routine joint field monitoring visits were conducted with emerging implementation issues discussed for corrective actions by the management. On activity implementation, efforts were more concentrated on horticulture-related interventions. This led to non-integration and major delays in implementing the livestock component.
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (Budget Holder, Lead Technical Officer, Project Task Force, etc.)	MS	The project's actors fully participated in the project's deliverables by holding periodic ad hoc meetings that provided guidance and direction. There was good engagement and supervision among FAO headquarters, the FAO Regional Office for Africa and the project management team, despite the COVID-19 pandemic-related travel restrictions. The Lead Technical Officer had been involved since the start and even contributed to drafting the project document. He was involved in reviewing and clearing all things related to the project (reports, requests and procurement documents) and was close to the in-country project team. Telephone, email and WhatsApp exchanges allowed him to be kept abreast with the field. Problems and successes could be shared with him as implementation

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
		progressed, even though he could not be physically present due to the COVID-19 pandemic-related travel restrictions and other duties.
E2.2 Project oversight (project steering committee, project working group, etc.)	S	The project steering committee and the partners actively participated in their respective engagements to provide oversight responsibilities. This contributed immensely to the achievement of results. However, the NTAT and the RTAT were not active.
E3. Quality of project execution For decentralized projects: Project Management Unit/Budget Holder For Operational Partners Implementation Modality projects: executing agency	S	A Project Management Unit was established and worked closely with the implementing partners on the letters of agreement. Annual workplans and budgets were developed and tracked to easily measure performance. The project underwent two management phases. The first Project Coordinator resigned, and it took almost one year before his replacement was set. This contributed to implementation delays for some of the planned activities, especially under the livestock component. The Finance Officer was in charge during this lapse. The M&E and Procurement Officers also came on board at a later stage. There were serious delays in the procurement processes and, in some cases, the approval process of the letters of agreement. As a result, most activities were implemented late or not at all.
E4. Financial management and co-financing	S	There is a good financial management system in place to track project disbursements and budget variances. In-kind co-financing pledges were also mobilized, but this was rather unsuccessful due to the closure of other projects like the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Project as planned sources of co-financing.
E5. Project partnership and stakeholder engagement	S	The project engaged extensively with all stakeholders. This positively influenced the delivery of project milestones. The communities were fully engaged and demonstrated interest in and ownership of the project activities. However, the project had less engagement with similar projects of this nature, such as ROOTS from the Ministry of Agriculture and the LsEbA project from the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources.
E6. Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products	S	Over the past two years, the project made tremendous achievements in producing newsletters and factsheets that highlight success stories and lessons learned. In addition, a video clip on a community garden irrigation system was featured at the World Water Forum in Dakar. This documentary increased project visibility and brought public attention to its activities.
E7. Overall quality of M&E	S	An M&E system was in place with periodic monitoring missions to track the implementation status and to provide recommendations that guide project implementations. Indicator tracking instruments like the GEF tool and the Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool were updated periodically. Monthly reports were also generated. These highlighted actions for management. A baseline study was conducted with identified indicators and set targets.
E7.1 M&E design	MS	The project had a results framework, but its theory of change was not well defined during the formulation phase. The incorporation of an evaluation design matrix would have been ideal since the M&E design went beyond the results matrix.
E7.2 Implementation plan (including financial and human resources)	S	Periodic M&E missions were conducted in accordance with the approved project workplan and budget. The Project Management Unit also had periodic monitoring missions and regular management meetings. The initial delays in recruiting key project staff had involved human resources challenges that were later addressed.

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MS	Overall, numerous factors like the COVID-19 pandemic and the related procurement bottlenecks affected project performance. Although the vegetable gardens were established, the solar-powered water reticulation systems for animal drinking points, grazing land and the Fula Kunda rice fields as major project activities still need to be completed.
F. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	S	Gender equity considerations were high with over 70 percent of the project beneficiaries being women. Vegetable garden and poultry plan beneficiaries were predominantly women, which further highlights the intervention's gender responsiveness. The project built the agency of women and immensely contributed to their economic empowerment. This built self-confidence among them. In fact, they took on lead decision-making roles both in the gardens and their households.
F2. Human rights issues/Indigenous Peoples	S	The project was invested in supporting community access to food and water as basic human rights. As such, it had no adverse effects on human rights. Human rights issues were well recognized, embraced and nurtured. This allowed for equal participation and the inclusion of both women and men, youth and other vulnerable people in the communities.
F3. ESS	S	The project conformed to the ESS, as approved in the design phase. Good agricultural practices, including climate-resilient sustainable agriculture and organic farming, were practiced in all of the vegetable gardens. This is more environmentally friendly. Access roads to the vegetable gardens were also under construction. When ready, these will also facilitate market access.
Overall project rating	S	

Notes:

ⁱ Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

ⁱⁱ This includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

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

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

1. The final evaluation has a dual purpose: accountability and learning. On the one hand, it aimed to obtain an independent assessment of whether or not the planned inputs led or contributed to the achievement of the planned results (outputs, outcomes, objective, impact). On the other hand, it sought to examine and detail project achievements. This involved identifying barriers and challenges to implementation and determinants for success or failure, as well as analysing any broader results and impacts – positive or negative, intended or unintended. This is to inform and improve similar projects in the future.

1.2 Intended users

2. The primary intended users of the evaluation include: the Budget Holder; the Project Task Force (PTF); the Chief Technical Adviser; technical, programme and operations personnel of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the donor; and other external stakeholders like governmental institutions related to the project – especially the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Livestock Services (see Table 1). The evaluation’s findings can be used to effect change.

Table 1. Purpose and intended users of the evaluation

Purpose		Intended user
Accountability: This responds to the information needs and interests of policymakers and other actors with a decision-making role.	Inform decision-making Provide accountability	FAO management Government of the Gambia (Department of Agriculture, Department of Livestock Services, etc.)
Improvement: Programme improvement and organizational development provides valuable information for managers or others responsible for programme operations.	Improve programming	Operational partners Project Task Force (PTF), Project Management Unit (PMU), FAO in the Gambia The GEF project formulators
Enlightenment: An in-depth understanding of the programme and its practices normally cater to the information needs and interests of programme staff and sometimes participants.	Contribute to knowledge	FAO personnel and future formulators and implementers

Source: FAO. 2024. Terminal evaluation of the project “Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia” – Annex 1. Terms of reference. Rome.

1.3 Scope and objectives of the evaluation

3. The evaluation covers the project’s implementation period from December 2016 to December 2022. It does not fully include activities that were undertaken from January to October 2023 as the project was granted no-cost extensions. The first of the last two no-cost extensions was granted during the evaluation’s data collection phase. Publication was delayed until after June 2023 in an effort to include the findings from the latest Programme Implementation Report (PIR) in the analysis. However, as of July 2023, the PIR remains

unavailable and project was extended again. As a result, the evaluation cannot include that last implementation period. The evaluation was carried out as a decentralized evaluation as per the FAO Office of Evaluation and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) evaluation policy under the responsibility of the FAO Regional Office for Africa.

4. The final evaluation sought to assess the extent to which the project achieved its intended results. It also aimed to determine whether the project's model and its specificities were tied to the Republic of the Gambia and Gambian law in a way that may warrant scaling up.
5. The evaluation covered all interventions across the project's components in the ten selected districts across three regions: North Bank; Central River, north; and Upper River, north. It reached a representative sample of all involved stakeholders within and outside the intervention regions. The evaluation focused on activities that happened after the mid-term review (MTR), that is, after February 2020. This is because the MTR had covered the first half of implementation in depth. Regardless, the final evaluation was comprehensive of the project's main implementation timeframe. It addressed key questions based on the GEF policy and evaluation criteria (see Table 2).

Table 2. Evaluation questions based on the GEF criteria

GEF criteria	Evaluation questions
Relevance	<p>Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, country priorities and the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF)?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes? Were the project's strategy and planned actions relevant and adequate to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and all stakeholders involved? ii. How aligned is the project with the FAO CPF and the Gambian National Development Plan, its forestry policy and strategy, its climate change policy and strategy, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? iii. Has there been any change in the relevance of the project since its design/since the MTR, such as new national policies, plans or programmes that affect the relevance of the project's objectives and goals? iv. If you could change anything about the design, what would you change? <p>To what extent were the project formulation processes participatory?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Was the project design approach participatory? How were the intervention areas selected, and how were the stakeholders and beneficiaries identified?
Effectiveness	<p><i>Effectiveness by outcome</i></p> <p>To what extent have the project objectives been achieved, and were there any unintended results? What results, intended and unintended, has the project achieved across its components?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. To what extent have the institutions and regulatory frameworks been revised, and how do these contribute to the overall project objectives? ii. To what extent have the vulnerability assessment and monitoring programmes been established? iii. To what extent has agriculture resilience increased in the Gambia? iv. To what extent has livestock-sector resilience increased in the Gambia? v. To what extent has the knowledge and awareness of climate change and mitigating measures increased due to the project? vi. To what extent has the knowledge gained been utilized by the project beneficiaries and the implementing partners?

GEF criteria	Evaluation questions
	<p><i>Results and intended impact</i></p> <p>To what extent has the project contributed to decreasing climate change vulnerability within the agriculture and livestock sectors in the project's implementation areas?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Are the planned community garden schemes established and operational? ii. Are the planned community poultry and livestock schemes established and operational? iii. What is the level of income generated from the various livelihood improvement schemes (vegetable gardens, poultry, small ruminants)? iv. How have the project interventions built community resilience to the impact of climate change and variability? v. What has been the added value by FAO, the implementing partners and other key stakeholders towards resilience building against climate change and variability? vi. What factors contributed to the attainment of project impact, and how could these be further strengthened and sustained?
Efficiency	<p>To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost-effectively?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects and partnerships and avoided the duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives? ii. To what extent has project management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation? iii. To what extent has the project implementation model been efficient in terms of value for money and cost efficiency? iv. What suggestions do you have towards improving efficiency in this and future projects of this nature?
Sustainability	<p>What is the likelihood that the project results will continue to be useful or remain even after the end of the project?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. What are the key risks which may affect the sustainability of the project benefits in terms of economic, environmental, institutional and social sustainability? ii. Have issues of sustainability been sufficiently planned and managed within the project context to mitigate the identified risks? iii. To what extent is this project likely to build upon results achieved at the country level, particularly in light of the new GEF financing cycle (GEF-8) or through other potential donors?
Factors affecting performance	<p><i>Implementation</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. To what extent did FAO deliver on project identification, concept preparation, appraisal preparation, approval and start up, oversight and supervision? ii. How well were risks identified and managed? iii. To what extent were responsibilities delineated and implemented in a complementary manner among the implementing partners? iv. What challenges were encountered in the implementation of project activities? How did these impact project outputs, and how were they addressed? v. What could have been done differently to improve project performance? <p><i>Execution</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. To what extent did the execution agency effectively discharge its role and responsibilities related to the management and administration of the project? ii. Have issues of joint programming between and among the implementing partners been sufficiently addressed to create synergy and avoid the duplication of efforts/resources?

GEF criteria	Evaluation questions
	<p>iii. What challenges were encountered in the project execution? What was their impact, and how were these resolved by the executing agency?</p> <p>iv. Any ideas or suggestions to improve the execution rate of this and/or future projects of this nature?</p> <p><i>Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)</i></p> <p>i. M&E design: Was the M&E plan practical and sufficient?</p> <p>ii. M&E implementation: Did the M&E system operate as per the M&E plan?</p> <p>iii. Was information gathered in a systematic manner, using appropriate methodologies?</p> <p>iv. Was the information from the M&E system appropriately used to make timely decisions and foster learning during project implementation (adaptive management)?</p> <p>v. How effective has the reporting system been in terms of quality, timeliness and feedback mechanisms?</p> <p>vi. What would you consider as the key weakness/es of the M&E and reporting system, and how could these be resolved?</p> <p><i>Financial management and co-financing</i></p> <p>i. To what extent did the expected co-financing materialize, and how did a shortfall in co-financing affect the project results?</p> <p>ii. What could have been done to avoid such shortfalls in co-financing?</p> <p>iii. What has been done to bridge the gap created by the shortfall in co-financing, and has this been effective or otherwise?</p> <p><i>Project partnership and stakeholder engagement</i></p> <p>i. Were other actors such as civil society, Indigenous Peoples or the private sector involved in project design or implementation, and what was the effect on the project results?</p> <p>ii. How would you gauge such partnerships and reasons for such a rating?</p> <p>iii. How could such partnerships/stakeholder engagements be further strengthened to ensure the sustainability of project gains?</p> <p><i>Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products</i></p> <p>i. How is the project assessing, documenting and sharing its results, lessons learned and experiences?</p> <p>ii. To what extent are communications products and activities likely to support the sustainability and scaling up of project results?</p> <p>iii. Have there been any communication barriers? How did these impact the project, and how were these addressed?</p> <p>iv. How were the knowledge products generated and utilized in the project context?</p> <p>v. What could have been done differently to enhance the area of knowledge management and knowledge products?</p>
<p>Environmental and social safeguards (ESS)</p>	<p>To what extent were the ESS taken into account in designing and implementing the project?</p> <p>i. Was an environmental impact and social assessment conducted at the design stage of the project?</p> <p>ii. How have the ESS been considered during project implementation?</p> <p>iii. How have these ESS impacted project outputs, outcomes and impact?</p>
<p>Gender</p>	<p>To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing the project? Was the project implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits?</p>

GEF criteria	Evaluation questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Has the project been implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits? ii. Have there been gender-disaggregated data? iii. How have the most vulnerable populations been involved in the project design, implementation and benefits? iv. How have the agency of women and youth been built within the project context in terms of their involvement in decision-making and holding leadership positions as key drivers towards building resilience to the impact of climate change and variability?
Progress towards impact (<i>folded under the effectiveness of results and sustainability sections to avoid repetition</i>)	<p>To what extent may the progress towards long-term impact be attributed to the project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Is there evidence of environmental stress reduction and environmental status change in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks? ii. Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards long-term impact of the project? How could these be effectively addressed, if any? iii. What could be considered as major project contributions towards long-term impact? iv. What could be considered key drivers for the attainment of such project contributions towards long-term impact? v. How could such key drivers be sustained in the long-term?
Lessons learned	<p>What are the most critical lessons that have been learned from implementing this project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. What knowledge has been generated from project results and experiences, which have a wider value and potential for broader application, replication and use? ii. What have been the key challenges faced in implementing this project? iii. Have these challenges been effectively addressed in the project context? If yes, how? If not, then why not? iv. Based on the lessons learned and the current context, what recommendations exist in terms of refocusing the project interventions? v. Have the lessons learned been generally utilized in the project context and beyond?

Note: This was revised during the inception phase. See the evaluation matrix in Appendix 6.

Source: FAO. 2024. *Terminal evaluation of the project "Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia" – Annex 1. Terms of reference*. Rome.

1.4 Methodology

6. Approach: The evaluation adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group's norms and standards (UNEG, 2005) and aligned with FAO's evaluation manual (FAO, 2015) and methodological guidelines and practices. It presents an assessment using the GEF criteria as presented in the GEF evaluation criteria rating table (see Appendices 2 and 3). The evaluation also presents the financial and co-financing data according the updated GEF guidelines on co-financing (GEF, 2018) (see Appendix 4). Furthermore, the evaluation followed a theory of change (TOC) approach with an emphasis on the results chain. The TOC sought to capture the causal relationship between inputs, outputs, outcomes, impact and the key underlying assumptions. The TOC developed by the MTR was reviewed and adjusted to satisfy the final evaluation requirements with details incorporated into this report. Additionally, an evaluation design matrix was developed to outline the indicators, evaluative criteria,

information sources, and collection methods and instruments (see Appendices 6a and 6b). The main evaluation questions, as highlighted in the terms of reference, were further expanded into subquestions to capture information on the overall project and its components, delivery processes, achievements, challenges, lessons learned and a way forward. Specifically, a mixed method approach was applied using instruments as outlined in the following points.

1.4.1 Desk review

7. The desk review covered project documents, including: the MTR; project monitoring reports; the project information platform; semi-annual country reports; PPRs; PIRs; national strategies; documents from regional and local governments, and organizations and institutions involved in climate change and adaptation; technical reports; FAO support mission reports; and any other relevant information.

1.4.2 Quantitative data collection

8. The evaluation design matrix captured quantitative data on project activities, outputs, outcomes and impact to complement existing monitoring data from the project reports, especially the PIRs and the finance and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports (see Appendix 6a).

1.4.3 Qualitative data collection

9. Various techniques were used for qualitative data collection: key informant interviews (KIIs); focus group discussions (FGDs); semi-structured interviews (SSIs); the collection of success stories; and direct observations that adhered to COVID-19 protocols and restrictions during field visits. A checklist was developed to cover relevant evaluation questions that guided the KIIs and SSIs at the national, regional and community level. Project steering committee members, technical team members from key implementing agencies and related stakeholders were targeted for the KIIs. Interview guidelines were formulated to facilitate the FGDs with project beneficiaries. Equally, separate focus group questionnaires as complementary evaluation instruments were designed. These targeted other stakeholders, including project steering committee members, implementing partners, the Project Management Unit (PMU), FAO and the related line ministries with a vested interest in the project.

1.4.4 Direct observations

10. Direct observations during field visits captured first-hand information on project activities and changes realized as a result of implementing such activities. This included visits to all of the vegetable gardens, sampled rangelands and other project-supported activities.

1.4.5 Collection of success stories

11. A number of direct quotes from project beneficiaries were also collected. These represented people's views, perceptions and opinions about a given project intervention. Participants for the case studies were identified during the FGDs, and their free, prior and informed consent was sought for the interviews and accompanying photos.

1.4.6 Site missions/field visits

12. Field visits were conducted at selected project sites (see Appendix 6b). Project participants, technical staff and other relevant stakeholders expressed their views and perceptions on project performance in terms of activities implemented, key achievements, challenges, lessons learned and a way forward. Such engagement helped to determine sites with a high or medium number of implemented activities. This involved sites with successful or even not-so-successful results. The reasons related to underperformance or high performance. Some sites that had been covered during the MTR were revisited to corroborate findings. Sites that had not been covered by the MTR were also visited to increase geographic coverage and representativeness.
13. Throughout this data collection process, efforts were made to ensure that women, youth, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups were consulted. In terms of gender analysis, the Evaluation Team also assessed the project's contribution to the policy objectives of FAO and the GEF on gender equality (FAO, 2020; GEF, 2017).
14. The Evaluation Team referred to FAO's manual on free, prior and informed consent (FAO, 2016b) in order to uphold the rights of the interviewees, especially at the community level. In addition, FAO's capacity development evaluation framework (FAO, 2019) was the basis for evaluating the measures, approach, performance and results of the activities that were implemented throughout the project to develop capacities. The interview protocols sought to measure the level of knowledge, attitudes and practices of the beneficiaries.

1.5 Limitations

15. The timely availability of certain government officials or staff from the implementing partners and stakeholders for the scheduled interviews, especially at the national and regional level, was a challenge as fieldwork coincided with the Presidential meet-the-people tour. The Evaluation Team revised its field mission itinerary to avoid scheduling conflicts with the tour. Whenever possible, virtual meetings were organized with the help of the project team to ensure that stakeholders were included in the evaluation.
16. Data collection was conducted in the field in 2022 as planned. The project extension, received after the evaluation had started, meant that certain results achieved in 2023 could not be fully captured. The evaluation therefore integrated the last PPRs in order to update relevant sections of the report. Every effort was made to ensure that all project achievements were included, but the extension could have led certain achievements to be overlooked.

1.6 Structure of the report

17. The report structure is based on the terms of reference. An introduction describes the evaluation's purpose and its intended users. Section 1 elaborates the evaluation's scope, objectives and methodology. It outlines the evaluation questions and the data collection instruments. The project's background and context follows with a detailed description of its components and their respective outcomes. The project's TOC is then presented in section 2.

18. Section 3 presents the evaluation's findings. It focuses on the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and other parameters. Their respective ratings are cited based on the evaluation's design matrix. Section 4 then presents the conclusions and recommendations, and section 5 details the lessons learned. The report ends with references, appendices and annexes.

2. Background and context of the project

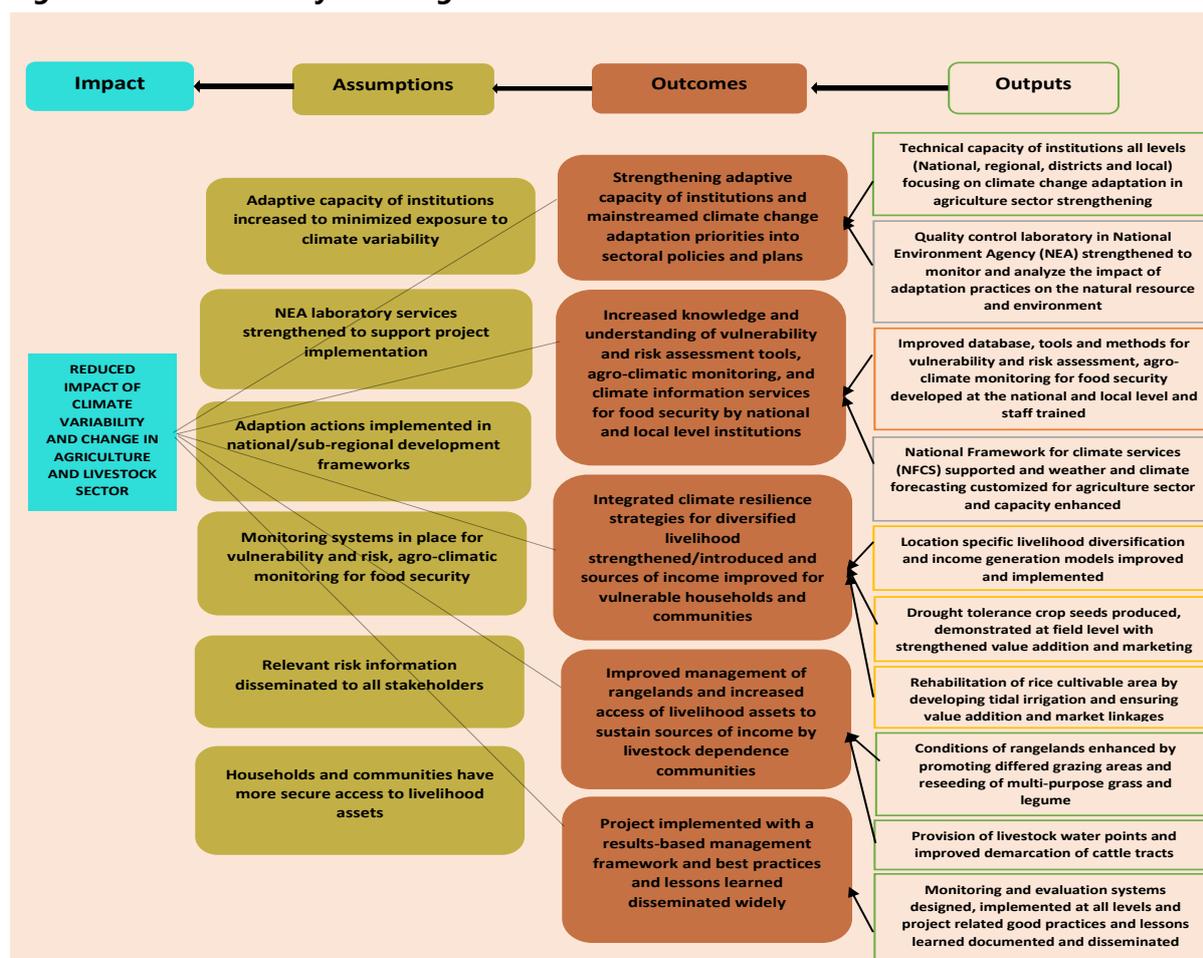
2.1 Theory of change

19. The project did not have a TOC during the design phase. Instead, it formulated one during the MTR. The TOC defines the linkages between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact that are required for the long-term goal. In fact, the TOC is built around a pathway of change. It describes the types of interventions that bring about the outcomes from the causal pathway. Each outcome is tied to an intervention. They show the connection among activities that are required to bring about a change. The TOC is the basis for the final evaluation, and the Evaluation Team reviewed and made amendments to it so that it could fit the project better and anchor the analysis. It was further elaborated following the MTR. The following linkages were established:
 - i. generation and monitoring of baseline information and challenges (What are the specific climate change vulnerabilities? How will emerging vulnerabilities be identified? How will project investments strategically target both existing and emerging threats? How will the project ensure that that investments lead to positive change?);
 - ii. results of the three primary, on-the-ground interventions (community gardens, improved production practices, livestock management);
 - iii. results of training and capacity building; and
 - iv. institutional, financial and structural management changes that lead to long-term impact.
20. The evaluation underscores that the TOC developed during the MTR focused on the project's objectives and outcomes, key players, target population, and main challenges and constraints. It omitted other nodes of the causal impact pathway, including key outputs and anticipated impact. Further, the lack of a clear narrative and arrows to show interlinkages among the identified areas made it difficult to establish the inextricable linkages between the various nodes of the impact pathway. The MTR's TOC also lacked the key assumptions and anticipated risks that are critical for the TOC narrative. As a result, the Evaluation Team provided a clear narrative of the revised TOC. It also incorporated other missing nodes from the impact pathway in its related risks and assumptions.
21. Overall, the project aimed to support the Gambia's agriculture sector in becoming climate resilient. It did so by promoting urgent and immediate adaptation measures. It strived to integrate adaptation priorities, as outlined in the National Adaptation Programme of Action on Climate Change, into agricultural policies, plans, and local actions. A climate-resilient, agriculture-led rural transformation agenda is critical to address growing rural poverty. In fact, the Government of the Gambia has prioritized rapid agricultural growth through its related policies and strategies.
22. The project's logical framework identified five interlinked components to achieve its long-term goal. Strengthening the adaptive capacity of institutions and mainstreaming climate change adaptation priorities into sectoral policies and plans will lead to greater climate resilience. In addition, greater knowledge on and understanding of vulnerability and risk assessment tools, agroclimatic monitoring and climate information services for food security on behalf of national and local institutions can significantly improve lives and

livelihoods. Similarly, the project's interventions on integrated climate-resilient strategies like vegetable gardens, honey production, and poultry and small ruminant activities can generate more income for vulnerable households and communities.

23. The project's interventions were geared to strengthen climate-resilient livelihoods by promoting sustainable crop intensification and innovative crop improvement and management practices. The introduction of drought-tolerant crop varieties, such as findi, cassava, rice, orange-fleshed sweet potato and dual-purpose cowpea, helped to realize the project's developmental objective. Improved rangeland management and increased access to livelihood assets to sustain income sources for livestock-dependent communities aligned well to the project's ultimate goal.
24. Assumptions that underpin the TOC include the strengthening of institutions and mainstreaming adaptation issues into relevant policies, development frameworks and plans. Similarly, monitoring systems need to be in place for climate vulnerability and risk assessments. Risks and other climate-related data or information need timely dissemination to enhance effective decision-making on livelihood activities and interventions. Figure 1 illustrates the schematic view of the revised TOC that was established for the final evaluation.

Figure 1. Revised theory of change



Source: Elaborated by the Evaluation Team.

2.2 Project description, objectives and components

25. The Fifth Assessment Report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2014) asserts that the African continent will suffer the most under climate change. More climate hazards are expected. The Gambia, as a least developed country, is among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. These vulnerabilities span many sectors and numerous livelihoods and assets within each sector. The agriculture sector, which includes livestock, is one of the most exposed to greater climate change and variability. Statistical analyses corroborate stakeholder perceptions. A decline in rainfall, shorter seasons and increased interannual variability have been confirmed as the most important climate risks faced by farmers (UNDP, 2022).
26. The Ministry of Agriculture requested that FAO provide technical support on climate change adaptation. In response, FAO prepared the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) to finance the Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia project. This aligned with relevant National Adaptation Programme of Action on Climate Change priorities and recent developments.
27. The project was executed by FAO in the Gambia. The Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock Services and the relevant line agencies such as the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), the Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency and other executing partners supported the implementation. This involved the Department of Water Resources and the National Environment Agency (NEA) at the national level. The Regional Agriculture Directorate and the Ministry of Agriculture's service unit representatives supported implementation at the regional and district level. The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) and the Women's Bureau were also involved.
28. The project was designed to cover a 48-month period from June 2016 to May 2020. It started in December 2016 with a planned duration of five years. The revised not-to-exceed date was December 2022. This became 30 June 2023 after a no-cost extension was granted during the evaluation. The project is now expected to end on 31 October 2023. The project is a full-sized GEF-5 project with USD 6 288 356 through its LDCF and USD 36 830 000 in co-financing for a total budget of USD 43 118 356.

Box 1. Basic project information

- The GEF project ID number: 5782
- Recipient country: Gambia
- Executing agency: FAO
- Implementing agencies: Ministry of Agriculture; Department of Agriculture; Department of Livestock Services; NARI; NEA; Department of Water Resources; NDMA; and Women's Bureau
- Date of project start and expected end: from 31 December 2016 to 31 October 2023
- Date of MTR: February 2020

29. The project's overall objective was to promote sustainable and diversified livelihood strategies that reduce the impacts of climate change variability in the agriculture and livestock sector. The project had five components:
- i. strengthen institutional and technical capacity for climate change adaptation in the agriculture sector;
 - ii. assess vulnerabilities and risks and disseminate timely climate risk information to users at all levels;
 - iii. promote integrated livelihoods, income generation, sustainable production and management practices in agriculture that link to value-added activities and marketing;
 - iv. enhance rangeland resilience by implementing improved management practices; and
 - v. M&E and knowledge management.
30. The project was implemented in three regions: Central River, north; Upper River, north; and North Bank. It covered ten districts and targeted at least 5 000 households that were involved in crop and livestock production. It addressed local issues to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance adaptive capacity. The project was expected to contribute to the LDCF Objective Climate Change Adaptation-1, reduce vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change, including variability, and Objective Climate Change Adaptation-2, increase adaptive capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change, including variability. Outcome 1.1 on strengthening the adaptive capacity of institutions and mainstreaming climate change adaptation priorities into sectoral policies and plans corresponds to Objective Climate Change Adaptation-1. Outcome 2.1 on increasing knowledge on and understanding of vulnerability and risk assessment tools, agroclimatic monitoring and climate information services for food security by national and local institutions aligned with Objective Climate Change Adaptation-2.
31. As stated, the project's implementing partners include: the Ministry of Agriculture; the Department of Agriculture; the Department of Livestock Services; NARI; the NEA; and the Department of Water Resources. Originally, the project's total GEF LDCF financing was USD 6 288 356 with an additional co-financing volume of USD 36 830 000. It had a four-year implementation plan from June 2016 to May 2020. However, implementation challenges and delays led to no-cost extensions for another six and a half years. The project was expected to end in June 2023 but received another no-cost extension until October 2023.
32. An MTR was conducted in February 2020. All recommendations were either endorsed or partially endorsed. However, as of December 2022, not all of the expected results had materialized. The recommendations focused on: i) delayed implementation (create more detailed work plans to better implement and monitor results and address no-cost extensions); ii) strategic approach (fulfil the project's capacity development goals by implementing institutional and policy reform and make it more efficient by reviewing its implementation strategy and exit or handover strategy); and iii) technical capacity (hire a full-time technical assistant). Despite these corrective actions, the project has yet to meaningfully deliver on its proposed institutional and policy reform (see Appendix 5). The evaluation will seek to determine whether these measures did in fact contribute to improved project implementation and delivery.

3. Findings

3.1 Relevance

EQ 1.1. Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, country priorities and the FAO CPF?

Finding 1. The project was congruent with the country's priorities, the GEF operational programme strategies and the FAO CPF.

33. The project design was highly relevant to the needs of the target population and aligned with the National Development Plan. However, there were slight changes in the design regarding the location of poultry and beekeeping activities. These were to be placed in the vegetable garden complexes but were moved to different locations based on a consensus agreement among the project team, the implementing partners and the beneficiaries. Also, the land development plans for the Wassu rice fields were later changed to the rehabilitation of the Kuntaur Fula Kunda rice fields. This was found to be more cost-effective. The involvement of the implementing partners and the communities in the procurement processes was crucial to ensure effective supervision and oversight during contract execution, especially at the community level.

EQ 1.1.a. Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes? Were the project's strategy and planned actions relevant and adequate to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and all stakeholders involved?

EQ 1.1.b. How aligned is the project with the FAO CPF and the Gambian National Development Plan, its forestry policy and strategy, its climate change policy and strategy, and the SDGs?

Finding 2. The project design was highly relevant. It met the needs of the target beneficiaries and aligned with the country's context and key national, regional and international policy documents.

34. The project aligned with the following: the Gambian National Development Plan, its climate change policy and strategy, and its forestry policy and strategy; FAO's CPF and development assistance framework; the GEF portfolio and priorities; most of the GEF core indicators; and SDGs 1, 2, 5, 12 and 13. It was relevant to FAO and the country in terms of addressing food and nutrition security, climate change and variability, improving lives and livelihoods, good governance, and sound environmental management. Alignment with the forthcoming GEF-8 cycle is critical.

EQ 1.1.c. Has there been any change in the relevance of the project since its design/since the MTR, such as new national policies, plans or programmes that affect the relevance of the project's objectives and goals?

Finding 3. The MTR findings and recommendations informed the project. Necessary adjustments were made during project implementation. There was a change to some initially planned activities due to a lack of funding and shifts in needs and priorities.

35. Slight changes related to site selection and the location of some planned activities and infrastructure development were made during project design. This involved poultry plans (broilers) and beekeeping enterprises. These were to be placed in the vegetable gardens but were relocated to the most appropriate locations within the communities based on collective decision-making among the communities, relevant implementing partners and the project team. The communities were asked to provide appropriate housing for the

broilers before the supply of feed, medication, equipment and other relevant materials. Most of the communities prepared the poultry houses and received the necessary feed, equipment and other material. A total of 30 individual and group broiler plans and 50 goat plans were established in ten communities with established gardens. A similar experience was realized for the supply of cockerels, which started in earnest in December 2022.

36. The initial land development plan at the Wassu rice fields (40 ha at an estimated cost of USD 250 000) was later changed to the rehabilitation of the Kuntaur Fulla Kunda rice fields (83 ha at an estimated cost of USD 250 000) based on advice from the project steering committee. This involves water tank construction for livestock drinking facilities, drinking troughs, stock routes and access roads. A solar-powered reticulation system is also needed under the livestock component, along with the construction or completion of two multipurpose centres. All of this has not started due to procurement delays. For example, five companies were granted contracts to construct the multipurpose centres in Kuwonkuba and Kerewan Nyakoi (Kansala Company). However, the contract was terminated because the contractor could not cope with price hikes. A new contract is underway for those two communities. The construction of multipurpose centres is important for the functionality of the gardens and the welfare of the actors and beneficiaries. They may be used for storage, construction work, meetings, and as a resting place for mothers and their babies. Further, construction of the milling machine houses and sheds is in progress and nearing completion. It was originally planned that communities would receive only milling machines. However, following technical advice, the delivery was amended to include milling machine houses and sheds for protection and keeping the machines safe.
37. This had negative consequences on the project and the target beneficiaries across the intervention regions and districts. For example, some farmers of the three cluster communities of Kuntaur Fulla Kunda, Jakaba and Touba had missed seasons for rice cultivation well before the intervention. The identified area for rehabilitation is now almost uncultivable due to hippopotamus intrusion, broken main canal intake gates, primary and secondary canal blockage and wild shrub growth. This area would have likely been abandoned by the community if it had not been for the intervention. Abandonment would have devastating effects since this is the only area that provides for their livelihoods. This cluster is a rice growing area, and the inhabitants entirely depend on rice cultivation.

EQ 1.1.d. If you could change anything about the design, what would you change?

Finding 4. The implementing partners preferred letters of agreement over concept notes. It was also requested that both the implementing partners and the communities be involved in the procurement process and that the exit strategy be developed earlier.

38. The implementing partners preferred letters of agreement over concept notes since the latter was considered an even slower process that could lead to delays. Greater involvement from partners and community representatives was expressed as a need in the future design of similar projects. This is important in granting contracts and supervising implementation processes for all procurement-related activities – especially at FAO in the Gambia and the community level, from infrastructure to seedlings, tools, equipment and milling machines. FAO in the Gambia had an approved ceiling of procurement activities that did not exceed GMD 100 000.00. This was determined low and needs to be reconsidered in an effort to expedite the procurement processes. The design for project closure, that is, the exit strategy, could have been developed and introduced upon project implementation. A

phase-in and phase-out strategy would have been useful. Further, early dissemination would have prepared key partners and communities well ahead of project closure. The implementing partners needed proper orientation regarding their deliverables in terms of the desired project outputs and outcomes.

EQ 1.2. To what extent were the project formulation processes participatory?

Finding 5. The project formulation was fairly inclusive.

39. The implementing partners, the communities and other stakeholders were all involved in various processes, including the selection of sites and project beneficiaries. Specifically, implementing partners, such as the Agribusiness Services unit under the Department of Agriculture, led the site selection process. The communities and existing extension network in the project intervention districts supported this process.

EQ 1.2.a. Was the project design approach participatory? How were the intervention areas selected, and how were the stakeholders and beneficiaries identified?

Finding 6. Both the design process and the selection of intervention areas, stakeholders and beneficiaries were very participatory. Community members and relevant key stakeholders and institutions at the regional and national level were consulted at the design stage, during site identification, in the selection of beneficiaries and during the actual implementation process.

40. The implementing partners and their extension agents, project staff, communities and other relevant stakeholders were consulted during site selection. Specific criteria, such as how vulnerable a given community was to climate change and variability, were used. Women and youth were emphasized in the crop and livestock subsectors. The level of community preparedness in terms of previous experience, track record and level of commitment in collaborating with the project was also examined. Site identification and selection was led by the Ministry of Agriculture through its line departments, that is, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Livestock Services, and service units such as Agribusiness Services under the Department of Agriculture.

In view of this analysis, the project's relevance is rated as Satisfactory (S).

3.2 Effectiveness and progress towards impact

3.2.1 Results – outcome level

EQ 2.1. To what extent have the project objectives been achieved, and were there any unintended results? What results, intended and unintended, has the project achieved across its components?

Finding 7. Individual and organizational capacity increased moderately. These project beneficiaries are using their new knowledge, equipment and tools to respond to climate change.

41. The extension and regional staff from the three project intervention regions and women from the ten districts were trained. They now demonstrate the knowledge and skills gained to effectively respond to the impacts of climate change. A total of 420 staff from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Agriculture, NARI, the Department of Livestock Services and the Food Technology Services unit under the Department of Agriculture were trained on various aspects of climate change adaptation. Further, 22 extension workers (19 males and three females) attended a training of trainers programme on post-harvest processing. A training programme on interpreting weather and climate information were held at the national and regional level, respectively. Six training manuals are being

consolidated. These training programmes built the institutional capacities of the implementing partners. Motor bikes, fuel and monthly allowances were provided to extension agents, regional agriculture directors and focal points. This not only enhanced routine field supervision activities but also boosted staff morale.

42. Three hundred forty farmers were trained on entrepreneurship for climate change adaptation in agriculture and natural resources. An additional 30 farmers (18 females and 12 males) were trained on good agroecology practices that focused on environmental protection, social safety nets and biodiversity. A step-down training was conducted for 375 farmers (331 females and 44 males) on food processing, handling, preservation and management techniques. Another ten communities with 755 farmers (521 females and 234 males) were trained on cooperative management and group dynamics. For vegetables, farmers were continuously trained and guided by the extension agents, the Songhai graduates and Farmer Field School (FFS) members in the application of modern methods of climate-friendly vegetable production (organic activities) that adapt to climate change and variability. Both the extension network and their regional staff provide technical support and advice to women horticulturalists who, in turn, apply the knowledge and skills acquired for good agricultural and animal husbandry practices. Agricultural resilience practices like seed priming, staggering plant varieties, spacing and treatment with natural solutions or insecticides to drive away pests are some of the good agricultural practices (GAP) adopted by female farmers. The NEA laboratory was upgraded with instruments and know-how. In fact, it demonstrates and takes on practical actions to monitor the impacts of the natural resources adaptation interventions.

Finding 8. Climate change priorities were integrated into national policies, strategies and plans. Technical support facilitated the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

43. This was clearly demonstrated in the merger of the two agriculture and natural resources policies from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources into one policy document. It was supported by the Integrating Agriculture to Climate Change project. This revised agriculture and natural resources policy is now fully operational alongside the agriculture and natural resources climate service framework under the National Framework for Climate Services. The development of a National Early Warning Strategy for the NDMA was a step towards incorporating and ensuring that issues around climate change and variability are adequately explored in the development of policy documents that contribute to the NAPs.

Finding 9. Despite progress, some weaknesses or shortcomings still prevent or reduce the government's full capacity to mainstream climate change adaptation into its strategies, programmes, practices and actions. This is at the individual, organizational, institutional and enabling environment level.

44. Numerous training programmes built the institutional and technical capacities of both the implementing partners and the communities within the project intervention areas. Whether or not this will actually result in a greater ability to adapt to climate change cannot be measured at this point in time. In fact, other factors such as the weak enforcement of policy dimensions, the availability of adequate human, financial and material resources, and the strong commitment required to mainstream and implement various adaptation measures present challenges in building even greater climate change adaptation capacities.

Finding 10. The project was not so effective in the livestock component. Several activities had barely started or were in the process of being completed.

45. There was a major setback under the livestock component. No activity had been implemented during the first three to four years of the project. This was due to the fact that the former project management focused more on vegetable gardens than livestock. This claim was further corroborated through interviews with staff from the Department of Livestock Services at headquarters and the national, regional, district and community level, as well as with current project staff. Also, the MTR revealed that the respective project components were not fully integrated as implementation progress and warrants proper attention. This recommendation was acted upon in earnest by the current project management team.
46. The boreholes for all of the planned livestock drinking points were drilled. However, as of December 2022, no overhead tanks, reservoirs or drinking troughs had been constructed, and no solar-powered reticulation systems had been installed. It is important to note that the procurement processes for the solar-powered reticulation systems, overhead tanks and troughs for the livestock drinking points, deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens took longer than expected due to reiterative administrative processes. These are, however, at advanced stages for clearance. Further, the majority of the stock routes were identified and demarcated. Concrete poles for seven of these stock routes and cattle tracks were all erected. The construction of the remaining three stock routes are on track for completion. A total of ten local conventions governing stock route and livestock management were signed across the intervention regions and districts. Copies of the signed conventions were given to the livestock committees and the regional and district authorities that oversee the livestock operations in the respective districts. This was part of the operational and legal instruments and reference materials to enhance easy management of the stock routes. Additionally, committees need to be trained on how to ensure the full operationalization of the signed conventions. None of the planned deferred grazing areas or intensive feed gardens were initiated, even though land had been secured in some areas. A total of 30 broiler activities with 500 birds each had been established and procurement for an additional 20 such activities are in progress. Four thousand thirty cockerels were distributed to 2 015 households in 133 communities. Fifty individual goat production (small ruminant) activities were also established with households prepared and beneficiaries trained.
47. During the evaluation, there was an outcry among communities for the completion of the pending infrastructure and related livestock facilities. These should be made operational in order to enhance the intended outcomes and impact. It is therefore hopeful that most of the pending work will be completed upon project closure as contracts were granted for most, if not all of them, under this component.

Finding 11. Vegetable garden support made significant progress in building community resilience, but this needs further expansion and support in terms of value-added activities and enhancing other value chain nodes like marketing.

48. The project made significant progress towards the realization of planned outputs and outcomes, especially in the following areas: institutional strengthening at the national, regional, district and community level (Outputs 1.1.1 and 1.1.2; Outcome 1.1); the timely dissemination of weather and climate information (Output 2.1.1 and Outcome 2.1); livelihood integration and income generation (Output 3.1.1 and Outcome 3.1); and sustainable agriculture production and management practices linked to value-added

activities and marketing (Output 3.1.2 and 3.1.3; Outcome 3.1). Support for communities with vegetable gardens created a lot of progress. However, the linkages to enhance value-added activities and marketing were not effectively realized, despite training programmes. Forty-two trainings with five study tours were held on food processing, preservation, storage, agribusiness, entrepreneurship, group management and leadership skills. Even equipment had been provided to various enterprises.

49. Most communities have had several vegetable garden harvests. Value-added activities and market access still need to be initiated in the target communities. Production data on the three most popular vegetables (onion, cabbage, tomato) at five garden sites (Kuwonkuba, Kerewan Nyakoi, Laimn Koto, Wassu, Gengi Wolof) in one season show that 143 136 kg were realized – from which, an average of 17 percent was consumed while 84 percent was sold. This generated approximately GMD 2 893 187.00 (USD 57 864). Further, this demonstrates how productive these vegetable gardens are and how, when well-maintained, these can even produce far more since these gardens have two to three production cycles in a given year.
50. Business plans for the ten supported vegetable gardens were developed. Copies were printed and distributed to the project beneficiaries and other key stakeholders, as stated by the project team in August 2023. These had yet to be finalized by the data collection phase in December 2022. This initiative will be followed by a national convergence between the vegetable gardeners and prospective firms or traders. The aim is to create effective market linkages and further market farmer produce through contract farming. This also involves value-added products and by-products from the implementation of various nature-based solutions in adapting to climate change and variability (vegetables and honey production and processing).

EQ 2.1.a. To what extent have the institutions and regulatory frameworks been revised, and how do these contribute to the overall project objectives?

EQ 2.1.f. To what extent has the knowledge gained been utilized by the project beneficiaries and the implementing partners?

Finding 12. There was significant progress under Component 1 in terms of revised institutional and regulatory frameworks. These will contribute to the delivery of the overall project objectives.

51. A National Early Warning Strategy (2021–2026) was developed under the National Disaster Management Agency. Climate change priorities will be integrated into four national policies, strategies and plans (FAO, 2022). Technical support facilitated the NAPs in the agriculture sector through systematic consultations at all levels. In this regard, 155 farmers (129 males and 26 females) were involved in national and regional consultations on the mainstreaming of NAPs into national policies. Additionally, this addressed gender inequalities in agriculture and natural resources management. The revised agriculture and natural resources policy was also drafted and awaits validation and sign off. The two agriculture and natural resources policies from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources were merged into one document that was supported by the Integrating Agriculture to Climate Change project. The full operationalization of this revised agriculture and natural resources policy had yet to be realized at the time of the evaluation. The agriculture and natural resources climate services framework under the National Framework for Climate Services was established. This was reported by the project team in August 2023. This establishment of the framework was ongoing as of December 2022 when the data collection phase took place.

52. Key implementing partners like the NEA, the Department of Agriculture and its subsidiary units (Food Technology Services and Agribusiness Services), NARI, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Livestock Services benefited from institutional strengthening. Staff from these implementing partners attended a series of training programmes under Component 1 and reportedly applied the skills gained to their respective institutions.
53. The NEA laboratory was upgraded with new equipment: gas chromatography mass spectrometry; accessories; and chemicals. Eight staff were trained on operation and maintenance and demonstrated the capacity to monitor the impacts of adaptation interventions on natural resources. However, based on discussions and suggestions made by the NEA team during data collection, there is a need for further staff training on chemical analysis and reporting through the laboratory's software component. The NEA team also reported that some of the chemicals arrived in the country shortly before their expiry dates and need to be replaced. The laboratory was refurbished and equipped but has yet to be functional.
54. Four hundred twenty staff members from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Agriculture, NARI, the Department of Livestock Services and the Food Technology Services unit under the Department of Agriculture were trained on various aspects of climate change adaptation. An additional 22 extension workers (19 males and three females) attended a training of trainers programme on post-harvest processing (see Finding 7). A training programme on interpreting weather and climate information were held at the national and regional level, respectively. The trained extension staff can now effectively guide, coach, supervise, monitor and provide technical advice and support on climate-resilient farming practices to both crop and livestock farmers.
55. Three hundred forty farmers were trained on entrepreneurship for climate change adaptation in agriculture and natural resources. An additional 30 farmers (18 females and 12 males) were trained in good agroecology practices that focused on environmental protection, social safety nets and biodiversity. A step-down training was conducted for 375 farmers (331 females and 44 males) on food processing, handling, preservation and management techniques. Another ten communities with 755 farmers (521 females and 234 males) were trained on cooperative management and group dynamics. For vegetables, farmers were continuously trained and guided by the extension agents, the Songhai graduates and FFS members in the application of modern methods of climate-friendly vegetable production (organic activities) that adapt to climate change and variability.
56. The numerous training programmes, exchange visits and study tours under Component 1 raised awareness about climate change and the relevant mitigation and adaptation measures to build community resilience. This aspect had an immense contribution. It involved staff from the implementing partners, extension agents and farming communities within the project intervention regions. All women from the supported vegetable gardens adapted to inorganic farming techniques: compost use; natural (chemical-free) insect repellent solutions; modern horticultural farming techniques; seed priming; and staggered crop and vegetable planting activities based on demand and need.
57. Essentially, the following provided a solid foundation to realize Outcome 1: implementing partner, extension agent, farmer and NEA staff trainings; the NEA laboratory upgrade; and the development of a National Early Warning Strategy. Although the numerous training

programmes were positive achievements in building the institutional and technical capacities of the implementing partners and the communities within the project intervention areas, it is unclear if this will actually result in a greater ability to adapt to climate change. This aspect cannot be measured at this point in time. In fact, other factors such as policy dimensions, the availability of adequate human, financial and material resources, and the strong commitment required to mainstream and implement various adaptation measures present challenges in building even greater climate change adaptation capacities.

EQ 2.1.b. To what extent have the vulnerability assessment and monitoring programmes been established?

Finding 13. Agroclimatic monitoring and the dissemination of climate information were quite effective and built farming community resilience.

58. A vulnerability and risk assessment expert was hired under Component 2. This expert held trainings to increase knowledge on and understanding of vulnerability and risk assessment tools for agroclimatic monitoring. Eighteen staff members from the Planning Services Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture, NDMA, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock Services, the Department of Water Resources, NARI and the Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency were trained on a Geographic Information System, and drone and database management for vulnerability and risk assessment in order to disseminate relevant risk information. An additional 16 Department of Water Resources staff members (12 males and four females) were also trained on interpreting weather and climate information so that they could disseminate this to stakeholders and target groups. Over 3 000 households were reached. The Department of Water Resources distributed seven dekad bulletins on climate-related early warning information. These reached more than 3 000 farmers. Weather and climate information was disseminated through radio, stakeholder sensitization, roaming seminars with various stakeholders and the provision of seasonal forecasts by hydrological, meteorological and key experts from the Department of Water Resources to enhance food security. The timely receipt of weather information increased farmer knowledge on optimal times for various agricultural activities from farmland clearing to ploughing, sowing, weeding and harvesting. The majority of the respondents indicated that they now have regular information, updates and advice on weather and climatic conditions. This enhanced their decision-making on production and other related activities.
59. Agrometeorological tools were procured and delivered to the Department of Water Resources to enhance the production and dissemination of climate information. Of note, is that the procurement process was still in progress by the end of the data collection phase in December 2022. The following contributed to Outcome 2: building staff capacity on vulnerability and risk assessment; a Geographic Information System; drone and database management; and the interpretation and dissemination of weather and climate information, including seasonal forecasts and dekad bulletins.

EQ 2.1.c. To what extent has agriculture resilience increased in the Gambia?

Finding 14. Targeted vulnerable households and communities received sufficient, diverse and combined support from the project. This facilitated their secure access to livelihoods, training and knowledge on agricultural practices, climate-smart farming and sustainable cropping systems. It also enhanced their resilience.

60. Ten community vegetable gardens were established across the project intervention regions under Component 3. In accordance with the latest PIR, 1 616 households of 1 337 females and 277 males currently benefit from these community gardens and have seen their livelihoods improve. These communities were supported by fencing off 5 ha gardens and providing boreholes with elevated tanks, an average of 23 to 24 reservoirs and solar-powered water reticulation systems. Multipurpose centres and toilets were also constructed in all but two sites, Kuwonkuba and Kerewan Nyakoi, where construction is currently on track. The project team had reported this in August 2023, and the construction was underway during the data collection phase in December 2022. Some facilities still need minor work, such as regulating the water reticulation systems, fixing repairs on broken standpipe heads, pouring concrete for the main gate floors, and finishing the sorting and grading areas. Improved varieties of assorted vegetable seeds (cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato, findi, beans, rice, maize) were distributed through NARI collaboration and support. A total of 160 cassava and 80 sweet potato demonstration plots of 9 217 cassava cuttings and 6 090 sweet potato vines were established in the ten gardens. This aimed to multiply drought-tolerant crop varieties that had been provided by NARI. It benefitted 1 616 farmers (1 339 females and 277 males). The NARI also produced 2 t of drought- and salt-tolerant early maturing and certified rice varieties for multiplication. A total of 1.8 t were utilized for sustainable crop intensification and resilience building. With NARI as an implementing partner, 1 339 females and 277 males benefited from 110 bags of compound fertilizer and urea, and 70 sets of equipment and tools to intensify the production of drought-tolerant crop varieties. Findi and cassava milling machines were also provided to garden-supported communities. These, however, were not operational as none of the milling sheds had been constructed – nor was any training held on machine operation. Two power tillers were supplied to each garden for ploughing. This reduced the drudgery on women during production activities while improving livelihoods at the community level when rented out to external communities and farmers.
61. Most gardens completed the first and second production cycles and were involved in nursery preparation for the third production cycles as of December 2022. Across all vegetable gardens, each participating member realized GMD 15 000.00 on average of annual income in addition to the quantity consumed or gifted to relatives. This significantly contributed to greater income, peace, unity, harmony and, above all, improved lives and livelihoods in the respective communities. Some of the beneficiary female farmers attested to this during the field interviews. In Kuwonkuba, for example, the women underscored the following when asked about key achievements:
- i. Unity and cohesion were promoted in the community. They could mobilize their own resources with GMD 50 000 to add four reservoirs. This provided easier water access for group members within the garden complex.
 - ii. Income generation supported women and men in farm work. Such income was used to pay for ploughing services. This reduced the drudgery for the women and created more time for them to focus on other production activities.
 - iii. The people within and around the community no longer buy vegetables for consumption as it is readily available in almost every household.
 - iv. About ten to 15 members opened their own savings account. They were taught how to do so during the agribusiness training.
 - v. Some women used gains from the garden to buy small ruminants for rearing.

- vi. All households in the community and beyond drastically reduced their "fish money" since most vegetables came from the garden.
 - vii. Members were able to pay for their children's school fees and school lunches. They could provide good nutrition and improved health within the community.
 - viii. The community felt very proud of the good support rendered by FAO.
62. The rural-urban drift has significantly impacted the number of people residing in rural communities. Sparsely populated communities like Kerr Selleh in the Jokadu district were advised to accommodate nearby communities through their vegetable gardens. This helped to reach the target population as per the project plan.
63. As of December 2022, a total of 84 775 birds were vaccinated against Newcastle disease through co-funding from the Agriculture for Economic Growth project (GCP/GAM/040/EC).¹ The poultry house from the Department of Livestock Services was rehabilitated. Five thousand cockerels were reared for cross-breeding with local breeds. This aimed to enhance production and increase the quantity of poultry meat as these exotic breeds have more flesh than the indigenous ones. Four thousand thirty cockerels were distributed to 2 015 households in 133 communities. Each household received two cockerels. The project established ten apiaries with 15 beehives each, benefiting 50 households.
64. A set of 100 farmers (60 females and 40 males) were trained on modern beekeeping techniques, honey production, value-added activities and marketing to improve income sources for vulnerable households and communities. A total of 443 farmers and extension workers were also trained on post-harvest handling, processing and preservation for fruits and vegetables, as well as the scaling up of GAPs for improved production, diversification and value addition. Further, 130 farmers and extension workers were trained on entrepreneurship to enhance their managerial skills. Twenty-five executive members from the Gambia Indigenous Livestock Multipliers Association (21 males and four females) were trained on animal health and production to boost large ruminant production and productivity.
65. A study tour to Njoben (Millennium Development Goal 1C) was organized for 210 farmers to help strengthen their knowledge on gardens and improve their production and productivity capacities. A total of 22 power tillers were also provided to the intervention communities as a way of mechanizing land preparation activities for climate-resilient crops. An additional three technical study tours were conducted by NARI to the National Institute of Agronomy Study and Research in Burkina Faso (seven NARI scientists), the Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research in Senegal (six NARI scientists), and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the Crop Research Institute and the Soil Research Institute in Ghana (four NARI Scientists and one National Seed Secretariat staff member). This aimed to strengthen their research knowledge on promoting the adoption of high yield, drought-tolerant crops that build resilience against climate change and variability.

¹ As of August 2023, the project team reported that these increased to 104 440 birds vaccinated against Newcastle disease. This enhanced the resilience of 6 445 farmers (3 520 females and 2 927 males) and diversified their livelihoods. In addition, 133 458 small ruminants were vaccinated against pest of small ruminants, benefitting 15 026 farmers (10 607 males and 4 419 females).

These study tours were said to be very fruitful. Indeed, the Gambian scientists were able to make strong recommendations to adopt practices in country.

66. At the MTR, project steering committee members agreed on the rehabilitation of 83 ha of land in the Kuntaur Fulla Kunda-Touba-Jakaba rice fields instead of the original plan of developing 40 ha of land in the Wassu rice fields. This was due to high investment related to land development. It is worth noting that the rehabilitation of the 83 ha of rice fields started, as of August 2023, with an intended 200 beneficiary rice farmers trained on GAPs. This rehabilitation process was quite slow as two assessments were done by the Soil and Water Management unit under the Department of Agriculture. The first assessment focused on existing problems, while the second assessment dealt with the design and drawings from September and October 2022. There was a gap of three to four months between the first and second assessments as there was a series of pushes and pulls between FAO and the Soil and Water Management unit regarding budget issues and rationale for the second assessment. This delayed the second assessment. There is much work to do on the rice fields: clearing the channels; silting the area; rehabilitating the culverts and sluice gates; and levelling the fields. A rice committee was in place with male and female representatives from Fulla Kunda, Jakaba and Touba. The Fulla Kunda rice committee has eight females and two males, and they hold meetings with the other two villages on any actions that need to be taken. The central committee for the three cluster communities is in the making, and a total of over 4 000 people directly benefit from the rice fields (excluding any indirect beneficiaries).
67. This cluster of three communities relied on the rice fields for their livelihoods. In fact, there were no vegetable gardens nor any other income generation activities to undertake. A female community member and FGD participant said: "things are extremely difficult this year as people are continuously buying rice, which does not happen here." The overarching message received is that the community is ready and eager for the rice fields to be rehabilitated. It should be noted that obstacles seriously reduce production levels as the few cultivated fields get destroyed (see paragraph 37). The communities have no machines or tractors for ploughing. In fact, on average, ploughing costs GMD 3 000 per plot. Most community members, especially women, cannot afford this. Regardless, this cluster of communities are ready and look forward to working with the project. Indeed, they hope that the project will enhance the 2023 dry season planting (from January to June). It was mentioned that, without project support, everything would perish. The design needs to be properly reviewed and budgeted to ensure sustainability. In particular, this includes the laying and building of the water routes and channels. Outcome 3 was attained from the following: the establishment of ten vegetable gardens; the supply of power tillers and other equipment; the piloting of NARI-supported, climate-resilient improved seed varieties; trainings on improved production, post-harvest processing and value-added practices; and study tours.

EQ 2.1.d. To what extent has livestock-sector resilience increased in the Gambia?

Finding 15. Although the key activities and interventions under the livestock component were well-articulated and could have made a significant difference on the livestock subsector – as the demarcation of stock routes to reduce conflict showed – major setbacks overshadowed and greatly limited its impact.

68. Component 4 had a major setback: no project activity was implemented during the first three to four years (see Finding 10). So far, ten deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens have been identified and assessed with staff from the Department of Livestock Services and other key stakeholders, including the herders themselves. Regardless, no further work has been done. As highlighted, ten boreholes for the livestock drinking points were drilled, but the elevated water tanks and accessories, as well as the drinking troughs and the solar-powered reticulation systems, have yet to be installed. Also, ten local conventions were developed, validated and signed off by the relevant authorities. This included governors from the project's intervention regions (North Bank, Central River, Upper River) and chairpersons from the local government areas of these regions. It also involved the village heads of the participating communities and chiefs from the project intervention districts. The Director Generals from the Department of Livestock Services and the Department of Agriculture served as witnesses during the signing ceremonies. A total of seven out of ten planned cattle tracks were also demarcated. Concrete pillars were erected along the boundaries of these tracks. It is worth noting that three extra cattle tracks and stock routes were contracted out by the GEF forestry project (GCP/GAM/031/GFF). This is part of the co-financing and, as reported by the project team in August 2023, are currently on track. The last one is the Nyakoi cluster stock route where conflict erupted between communities over the direction and coverage or limit of the cattle track. This issue was resolved after key stakeholders intervened: the Upper River governor; the local government area; staff from the Department of Livestock Services; the police; the National Livestock Owners Association; the Department of Agriculture; the Department of Forestry; and community representatives. The cattle track is now fully demarcated with a local convention. In fact, a strong and vibrant livestock committee is in place.
69. This component was initiated to increase livestock production and productivity, improve management and build resilience of the livestock subsector amid climate change and variability. During the evaluation, the livestock farmers stated that the demarcation of stock routes greatly reduced farmer-herder conflict that involves the district authorities and the police. Livestock are the hardest hit when it comes to climate change and variability. There is a serious lack of pasture within and beyond most parts of the project intervention regions. This poses severe livestock feeding challenges. The free-range grazing areas are completely worn. Unpalatable pastures dominate the rangeland while the palatable grass species are virtually going extinct. Inadequate watering facilities for livestock within and beyond the project intervention areas require an average of 7 km cattle trek in search of water. This negatively impacts livestock production and productivity. These are some of the major challenges that the project seeks to address. Indeed, they are critical to project success. This demands that all pending livestock-related activities be addressed before project closure: the completion of water facilities and related accessories for the livestock drinking points; the demarcation of stock routes; the mounting of concrete pillars; and the establishment of the identified deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens.
70. Of note is a study tour to Maka Kolibantang in Senegal. This exposed livestock farmers to the various livestock water management practices. Key were the sinking of boreholes and mounting them with solar-powered reticulation systems, elevated water tanks with drinking troughs and long-distance reservoirs for the most remote communities so that they can access watering facilities. This prompted the project and the Government of the Gambia to follow. As a result, the Department of Livestock Services plans to support the extension of the livestock drinking points to reach other remote communities in the project intervention districts. The drilling of boreholes, the demarcation of deferred grazing areas

and intensive feed gardens, the establishment of stock routes and the study tour to Maka Kolibantang all contributed to the attainment of Outcome 4. However, many activities have yet to be accomplished: the pending accessories for the boreholes; the erection of concrete pillars for the stock routes; leadership and management trainings; and the operation of poultry and small ruminant activities.

EQ 2.1.e. To what extent has the knowledge and awareness of climate change and mitigating measures increased due to the project?

Finding 16. The robust M&E system helped to disseminate project knowledge, information sharing and learning. It also promoted project visibility.

71. For Component 5, an M&E system was in place and backed by an M&E plan. The Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool was strictly followed and updated accordingly. The project's baseline study was conducted using a Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of Climate Resilience of Farmers and Pastoralists (SHARP+) methodology. Its targets were clearly defined. An exit strategy for the project was also collectively developed and validated by the implementing partners in collaboration with key stakeholders and community representatives. Good practices, success stories and factsheets were documented and disseminated. These effective communications and outreach activities raised awareness on various project interventions among stakeholders. This contributed to high visibility, attention, commitment and support for the project activities. A project steering committee, the National Technical Advisory Team (NTAT) and the Regional Technical Advisory Team (RTAT) were also established. The project steering committee held meetings and monitoring trips to the sites. Two project steering committee field visits and meetings were held in April 2022 and March 2023, respectively. The NTAT and the RTAT, however, were not as active as expected. The development of an M&E plan and system backed by the project steering committee, the NTAT and the RTAT ensured the effective monitoring, reporting, documentation and dissemination of GAPs. This contributed to the attainment of Outcome 5.

3.2.2 Results – intended impact

EQ 2.2. To what extent has the project contributed to decreasing climate change vulnerability within the agriculture and livestock sectors in the project's implementation areas?

Finding 17. The project moderately contributed to decreasing climate change vulnerability within the agriculture and livestock sectors.

72. Various institutional and technical capacity building programmes and the revitalization of policy and regulatory frameworks raised awareness on climate change and variability. This affected the implementing partners, the farming communities, and other key stakeholders at the central level and in the intervention regions. The institutionalization of the early warning system alongside regular weather forecasts and the dissemination of weather information helped farming communities better prepare for any eventualities or uncertainties that might crop up as a result of climate change and variability.

73. Support for the vegetable gardens was immensely helpful in building community resilience. This was especially relevant for women. It helped them take on other alternatives or adaptive measures as sources of good nutrition and income to sustain their families. Other livelihood ventures supported by the project include beekeeping, animal husbandry and poultry. These also built community resilience and cohesion. The development of local

conventions, the establishment of stock routes and the presence of livestock committees at the community level reorganized livestock management. This reduced the frequent occurrence of farmer-herder conflict that had been common in the intervention regions. When fully accomplished, the provision of livestock irrigation facilities and the establishment of the deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens will also go a long way in maintaining the health and security of the livestock population.

EQ 2.2.a. Are the planned community garden schemes established and operational?

Finding 18. The established gardens built the resilience of female vegetable growers and their families. This led to improved lives, livelihoods and social cohesion.

74. This area is where the project was most concentrated and therefore performed well. In fact, it had greater outcomes. All of the ten planned vegetable gardens were established with solar-powered water irrigation facilities, toilets (male and female) and multipurpose centres. The Songhai graduates worked with the gardens and provided on-the-job training, technical advice and supervision for the vegetable growers – the majority being female farmers. Through the relevant units, individual implementing partners provided a series of other training programmes on the following: crops and vegetable gardening; agribusiness matters; value-added activities; cooperative formation and operations; bookkeeping; group leadership and management; livestock breeding; poultry farming; food preparation and preservation; and handicrafts. The gardens further strengthened unity and cohesion within the beneficiary communities. Further, the gardens generated savings. As a result, the garden members opened up personal bank accounts. Each garden also had an account. Some members used their income to buy household furniture or livestock for breeding. In addition, the gardens improved the nutrition levels of the beneficiary communities: some produce was sold but part of it was also consumed. However, these gardens need to be linked to prospective agencies and firms in order to enhance the value-added activities and marketing efforts.

EQ 2.2.b. Are the planned community poultry and livestock schemes established and operational?

Finding 19. The community poultry and livestock activities were good initiatives, but they have yet to yield the expected impact due to a myriad of pending activities under this component.

75. The community poultry and livestock activities were underway during the evaluation. Most communities had already acquired housing for the plans and were waiting for the supplies and distribution. The project supplied all of the required equipment and materials for poultry. A total of 4 030 cockerels were distributed to the beneficiary communities by the Department of Livestock Services. This benefitted 2 015 farmers. Thirty broiler and 50 small ruminant activities were also established, as reported by the project team in August 2023 (see paragraphs 46 and 63).

EQ 2.2.c. What is the level of income generated from the various livelihood improvement schemes (vegetable gardens, poultry, small ruminants)?

Finding 20. The vegetable gardens generated a significant amount of income. This led to the economic and social empowerment of women. The livestock activities, which were not quite operational, differed from the garden results.

76. Available data showed that the total income generated from five vegetable gardens (Kuwonku Baa, Wassu, Lamin Koto, Genji Wolof, Kerewan Nyakoi) with a total of 614 members (591 females and 23 males) was GMD 3 527 588.00 (USD 70 552). The highest

income came from onions (GMD 2 233 089; USD 44 662), where Genji Wolof had the highest (23 percent). The second highest income came from cabbage (GMD 572 875; USD 11 458), where Wassu had the highest (28 percent).

77. Vegetable garden groups like that of Kerewan Nyakoi opened bank accounts at the Trust Bank in Basse. Their current balance at the time of evaluation was GMD 100 000.00 (approximately USD 2 000.00). Other communities also have bank accounts. In Lamin Koto, the community realized over GMD 1 million (GMD 1 244 840; USD 24 897) from the first harvest. On average, each member gets GMD 15 757 (USD 315) for the first season. All vegetable garden communities also had certain sustainability mechanisms like paid membership contributions or levies on production activities for every season.
78. Women used part of this income on school fees, uniforms and lunch for their children, as well as soap, food, clothing or weddings. The poultry, small ruminant and beekeeping activities have yet to be fully established or matured to generate income.

EQ 2.2.d. How have the project interventions built community resilience to the impact of climate change and variability?

Finding 21. Knowledge and skills were gained for climate change adaption. This, alongside the potential for income generation from vegetable gardens, built community resilience against the impact of climate change and variability.

79. Vegetable garden produce and income built resilience against climate change and variability. The produce supplemented farm family tables. At the same time, vegetable sales helped household expenses and were used for: school and medical fees; clothing; cultural and religious ceremonies; food (rice); and furniture. Training programmes on GAPs, climate-resilient sustainable agriculture, and other technical advice and support through project interventions made communities more aware of and committed to climate change adaptation.
80. Community mobilization created a sense of belonging, cohesion, and mutual recognition and support. This brings great social capital amid the climate-induced uncertainties and eventualities of floods, windstorms, droughts, wildfires and rising sea levels. The demarcation of stock routes and the erection of concrete poles (although incomplete), as well as the institution of committees and local conventions greatly reduced farmer-herder conflict. Beekeeping, poultry and small ruminant activities, when fully up and running, will positively impact the lives and livelihoods of the intervention communities both in terms of greater income and better nutrition.

EQ 2.2.e. What has been the added value by FAO, the implementing partners and other key stakeholders towards resilience building against climate change and variability?

Finding 22. FAO's involvement raised the project's profile. The strong collaboration and commitment between FAO and key stakeholders enhanced institutional capacity among both the implementing partners and the communities.

81. FAO, the implementing partners and other stakeholders planned, organized, managed and supervised various project interventions across the regions and at the national level. FAO provided guidance and support in terms of policy directives and initiatives. In fact, FAO improved policy dimensions while building the capacity of national institutions, especially the implementing partners. FAO also tried to ensure due diligence processes, especially on

procurement issues like civil engineering work and the supply of equipment and materials to enhance the effective and efficient delivery of the planned project interventions. The training and capacity building interventions also raised awareness on climate change and variability. More than anything, this helped to build the capacities of both the implementing partners and the communities in terms of technical, institutional and material support. In the medium- and long-term, this in itself could lead to building a stronger foundation for and commitment to project sustainability, especially after project closure.

82. The involvement of the implementing partners in project interventions strengthened and increased the presence of the implementing partners in the various communities. Moreover, it built the confidence and commitment to work with vulnerable communities in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change and variability. The Songhai youth graduates that FAO had posted at the vegetable gardens provided on-the-job training, technical support and advice for female growers. This enhanced the women's knowledge and skills in various organic farming practices, post-harvest processing and marketing. Such GAPs will likely be replicated by other projects that address climate change and variability.

EQ 2.2.f. What factors contributed to the attainment of project impact, and how could these be further strengthened and sustained?

Finding 23. Strengthened community institutions and structures and raised awareness on climate change and its impact vis-à-vis the need for greater resilience complemented key vegetable garden and livestock interventions. This contributed to the project's impact.

83. The project made significant impact in terms of improving nutrition and increasing income among communities through the ten vegetable gardens. This was done through material and technical support, as well as extension advice. These initiatives also helped to organize and mobilize. At the same time, women's capacity was strengthened in the participating communities. Indeed, the effective mobilization of communities from the beginning of project implementation engendered their commitment to the initiatives. This was instrumental in ensuring group cohesion and success. Sensitization, awareness raising and study tours also built capacities and increased implementing partner and community commitment in adapting to climate change and variability.
84. The institution of livestock committees and the local conventions further organized herders to build resilience against climate change and significantly reduce farmer-herder conflict. The due diligence processes within the procurement activities also contributed to efficiency. However, the procurement process should be further reviewed to expedite the process. This should avoid delays yet still ensure quality. The regular and continuous monitoring, supervision, coordination and provision of technical advice from the Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and the Funding Liaison Officer (FLO), along with the project team and the FAO Country Office, were a force to reckon with in terms of effective project delivery. This should be further strengthened at all levels, including that of the implementing partners and the communities to enhance further impact and continuity.

3.2.3 Progress towards impact

EQ 7.1. To what extent may the progress towards long-term impact be attributed to the project?

EQ 7.1.a. Is there evidence of environmental stress reduction and environmental status change in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks?

Finding 24. Strengthened policy and regulatory frameworks alongside capacity building initiatives (technical, material, financial) for the implementing partners and the communities were good foundations in terms of long-term impact.

85. The project built the adaptive capacities of the communities in both the crop and livestock subsectors within the intervention regions. Capacity building initiatives, strengthened policy and regulatory frameworks, and exchange visits raised awareness on climate change and variability. At the same time, the provision of relevant technical, material and financial support for both the implementing partners and the communities built a solid foundation for adapting to climate change impacts. The community orientation and the building of institutional capacities of the implementing partners and the community structures instilled a political commitment and an ownership of the project interventions.
86. There was support for both crop and livestock farmers through: vegetable garden, small ruminant, poultry, beekeeping and cockerel activities; the establishment of stock routes and livestock irrigation facilities; and the development of local conventions. All of these efforts contributed to the effective planning and management of both the crop and livestock subsectors in the intervention regions. The development, signing and institutionalization of local conventions improved rangeland management and reduced farmer-herder conflict. In fact, the evaluation received various reports that farmer-herder conflict had significantly reduced or become non-existent in the intervention districts since the signing of the local conventions and the demarcation of stock routes.
87. Gains made by female farmers, especially through the vegetable gardens, led to their economic empowerment. Indeed, many had voices at both the community and household level. They could independently address socioeconomic and livelihood issues at the individual, household, and community level and participate in decision-making processes. This increases their agency within society as a whole.
88. Early warning systems, strengthened policy and regulatory frameworks like the revised agriculture and natural resources policy and the national disaster management strategy, and the timely dissemination of weather forecasts and information helped to better prepare both crop and livestock farmers for any unexpected eventualities. Supporting crop farmers, particularly women, in embarking on alternative livelihood activities and nature-based solutions like vegetable garden, beekeeping, poultry and small ruminant activities diversified their livelihood base and income sources. This then reduced their vulnerabilities. Organic vegetable growing practices maintained biodiversity in the ecosystem and increased production and productivity. Ultimately, this contributed to greater income and stronger food security and self-worth within the beneficiary communities.

EQ 7.1.b. Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards long-term impact of the project? How could these be effectively addressed, if any?

Finding 25. The ability, commitment and willingness of the implementing partners to take on their designated roles and responsibilities per the exit strategy, compounded with the final accomplishment of pending project activities before phase out, are potential risk factors.

89. The commitment, willingness, and technical and financial capacity of the implementing partners in taking over the project interventions that are relevant to their mandates is quite critical for long-term impact. Also, a series of pending activities were planned for the extension phase (from January to June 2023, now October 2023). The extent to which these activities are accomplished will play a key role in realizing long-term impact. Key among

these are the completion of the livestock irrigation facilities and stock routes, the establishment of the deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens, and the rehabilitation of the Kuntaur rice fields. In addition, the formation of female vegetable grower groups into cooperatives can facilitate aggregated produce and link these cooperatives to prospective firms or private-sector dealers for contract farming. Better storage and market access for the vegetable producers may also be key to reduce barriers and risk. These aspects would enhance sustainability. Indeed, they would contribute to long-term impact on the lives and livelihoods of participating community members, especially women and youth.

EQ 7.1.c. What could be considered as major project contributions towards long-term impact?

EQ 7.1.d. What could be considered key drivers for the attainment of such project contributions towards long-term impact?

EQ 7.1.e. How could such key drivers be sustained in the long-term?

Finding 26. The participatory nature of the project design and implementation mechanisms led to effective delivery and long-term impact. This could be further strengthened by forging much stronger engagement and linkages among the project, the implementing partners and the communities in the project's intervention districts.

90. The project's long-term impact was guided by the following: ten supported vegetable gardens; the demarcation of stock routes; the introduction of small ruminant, poultry and beekeeping activities; the institutionalization of local conventions; and the introduction of climate-resilient crop varieties. These elements were accompanied by intensive trainings, exchange visits, and equipment and material support. The training programmes, policy reviews and exchange visits raised awareness and engendered a commitment to adopt relevant adaptation measures. This built community resilience to climate change and variability. Income and healthy food from the vegetable gardens empowered the women and boosted both their agency and recognition in society. They also learned and built leadership, group management and decision-making skills. They nurtured a culture of savings through their engagement with different project interventions. These attributes will enable them to continue. Indeed, they can benefit from various, initiated project ventures in the long-term. The knowledge and skills gained from GAPs and climate-resilient sustainable agriculture techniques, alongside their proper application, will go a long way in fortifying their resilience to climate change and variability.
91. A key driver is how the community groups were organized, mobilized and supported to undertake the adaptation measures introduced by the project. Other important factors involve the interest and commitment that was shown by communities through the interventions. This was visible through trainings and knowledge sharing, as well as strong cohesion both within and among communities. The familiarity among the implementing partners and their extension network as government agencies and the participating communities built trust and confidence. Indeed, this mutual learning and support contributed to project sustenance. Overall, the high level of vulnerability within the intervention communities and districts – compounded with the dire need to build resilience and address the impact of climate change and variability – were all triggers to support and embark on project initiatives that attain long-term impact.
92. Project gains can be sustained by ensuring group dynamics. This can be done through regular meetings and effective activity planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting

that enhance self-accountability. Trainings, re-trainings or step-down trainings in various skills and innovative knowledge transfers would also help to sustain such drivers in the long-term. Regular engagement between the implementing partners, the existing extension network and the communities would also serve as key motivating factors in sustaining these key drivers. In other words, the presence of extension networks in communities that get regular extension support and technical advice must not be compromised. Vigorous awareness raising, capacity building and resource mobilization on climate change and variability must continue in order to generate more interest in and commitment to addressing the emerging issues and vulnerabilities amid daily uncertainties.

In view of this analysis, the project's effectiveness and progress towards impact is rated as Moderately Satisfactory (MS).

3.3 Efficiency

EQ 3.1. To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost-effectively?

Finding 27. Despite drawn out procurement processes, the project was implemented efficiently and cost-effectively by following stringent procurement rules and adopting cost-effective measures.

93. In terms of efficiency, the project made significant progress in establishing ten vegetable gardens in the ten districts of the intervention regions. This came with heavy infrastructure development and the construction of boreholes and reservoirs with solar-powered reticulation systems. This made water access easier so that the women could water the vegetable gardens and significantly reduced the drudgery on female growers. In fact, they can now spend their time and energy on other production activities and community roles. This generated income, improved nutrition, fostered greater unity and social cohesion, and sparked higher self-confidence among women.
94. The dispatch of the Songhai graduates, extension staff and FFS members, as well as the technical and supervisory support rendered by the regional extension teams at the vegetable gardens, went a long way in bringing extension services to the doorsteps of the targeted beneficiaries at a minimal cost. This, alongside trainings from other service providers like the Agribusiness Services, the Horticulture Technical Services and the Food Technology Services under the Department of Agriculture, further ensured on-the-job training for the vegetable growers. This involved GAPs, organic farming and climate-resilient sustainable agriculture. It came with technical advice and support on various adaptation measures. This improved women's knowledge, skills and experience in building resilience against climate change and variability.
95. The protracted nature of the procurement processes were, however, observed and highlighted throughout the evaluation interviews with FAO, the implementing partners and the communities. This was attributed to overall processes at FAO and delays in initiating procurement processes at the project management and implementing partner level. Although the intensive scrutiny that is embedded within the procurement cycle ensures efficiency and quality delivery, it had a negative impact on implementation in terms of timeliness. This led to budget inadequacy given the frequency of price changes from high inflation rates and volatile economic trends.

96. The availability of skilled and qualified contractors and the required regular supervision of them by FAO engineers, the implementing partners and the communities needs strengthening. In most cases, the implementing partners and the communities remain unaware of the requirements that they were subject to through contractual agreements between FAO and the various contractors delivering services at the community level. This diminishes their level of involvement to ensure effective monitoring, irrespective of efforts to instil ownership. Indigenous knowledge within the communities and the institutional memory of the implementing partners should be further nurtured and integrated with the available technical knowledge to build community resilience.
97. Training provided to the eight national staff (NEA, three; Plant Protection Services under the Department of Agriculture, one; the Drug Law Enforcement Agency, one; Maize Growers Association, one; Food Safety Quality Authority, one; University of the Gambia; one) on the new laboratory equipment and materials should have covered both the hardware and software components, as well as the timely supply of good quality chemicals or other materials with longer expiration dates (see paragraph 19). This could have enhanced the laboratory's effective operationalization, which was a heavy investment and has yet to fully function. In fact, staff were trained on only hardware issues (see paragraph 53). Some of the chemicals reached the Gambia with shorter expiration dates than expected, rendering them effectively obsolete.

EQ 3.1.a. To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects and partnerships and avoided the duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives?

Finding 28. Apart from the GEF forestry project (GCP/GAM/031/GFF), the project did not engage with other climate change-related projects or forge partnerships in this direction.

98. The ability to build synergies and complementarities with similar projects is considered beneficial. In fact, such efforts avoid duplicated efforts and resources and ensure sustainability. There is no indication, however, that the project collaborated with other projects or institutions, apart from the GEF forestry project (see paragraph 68) and the European Union's Improving Food Security and Nutrition in the Gambia through Food Fortification project on the production and distribution of improved crop varieties (cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato, provitamin A maize). In fact, the project could have collaborated with the Ministry of Agriculture through the Resilience of Organizations for Transformative Smallholder Agriculture Project (ROOTS) and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources through the Large-scale Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Gambia River Basin (LsEbA) project. These projects address various adaptation measures that build resilience to climate change and variability. Although ROOTS was not a co-financing entity at the time of project preparation, it, as of August 2023, was supporting some of the gardens.
99. The LsEbA project works on restoration programmes for the following: community forests; degraded farmland; mangroves; public spaces and roadsides; baobab groves; woodlots; and schools. It also deals with the demarcation of stock routes, tree planting along boundaries, community beekeeping enterprises, and the provision of water facilities for community woodlots and vegetable gardens. ROOTS also supports female growers through seeds in regions that now include some of the supported vegetable gardens. These elements are key for the project in terms of absorbing and sustaining gains as it phases out.

EQ 3.1.b. To what extent has project management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation?

Finding 29. The project management team and the project steering committee were proactive in making strategic decisions to ensure quality delivery and better performance.

100. The MTR revealed gaps in integration and synergy among project components. Key components like livestock lagged behind. The project management team created strategies to expedite the implementation of pending activities and to ensure the full integration and synergy among different components. This flexibility and adaptation on behalf of the project management team initiated most of the pending activities. As a result, the impact assessment of the project's intervention activities on natural resources by the NEA and the impact assessment of the trainings on intervention activities by the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO were completed. The project team shared this aspect in August 2023, but these had yet to start by the end of the data collection phase in December 2022.
101. The project steering committee's decision to rehabilitate the Kuntaur rice fields (83 ha) instead of develop land in the Wassu rice fields (40 ha) brought a significant cost reduction, even though this activity has yet to effectively begin. There is a margin of USD 5 000 between land development and land rehabilitation per hectare, as detailed by the Central Projects Coordination Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture. This, if implemented during phase out, would yield benefits for the entire cluster of communities and beyond.

EQ 3.1.c. To what extent has the project implementation model been efficient in terms of value for money and cost efficiency?

Finding 30. The procurement process and the promotion of community involvement in project activities were found to be an efficient model, even though the procurement process delayed some activity implementation.

102. The procurement process caused a series of delays in initial activity implementation. While in time, this was mitigated as FAO got a firmer grip on it following the rules and regulations, this helped ensure value for money and cost efficiency was present throughout subsequent implementation. Requesting communities to contribute in-kind towards some of the project activities like the provision of houses for poultry and small ruminants helped to ensure efficiency, commitment and project ownership. The use of organic manure and herbal or natural solutions as insect repellents were all cost-effective and enhanced product quality.

EQ 3.1.d. What suggestions do you have towards improving efficiency in this and future projects of this nature?

Finding 31. FAO took on the procurement process with less involvement from the implementing partners and the communities. This slowed down the process and led to monitoring and supervision problems on behalf of both the implementing partners and the communities.

103. The procurement of goods and services should involve both the implementing partners and the communities at various stages. This would have expedited the process, built a sense of ownership and enhanced the future supervision of contracts without compromising due diligence. The collective development of plans with the full involvement of the implementing partners, the communities and other relevant stakeholders would be beneficial in getting the buy-in and commitment to deliver on the planned activities. Regular reviews, joint monitoring and supervisory visits, the production and sharing of

reports or lessons learned, and constant feedback for the implementing partners and the communities on issues observed, raised or identified would also help to ensure efficiency in this and any future project of this nature.²

In view of this analysis, the project's efficiency is rated as Satisfactory (S).

3.4 Sustainability

EQ 4.1. What is the likelihood that the project results will continue to be useful or remain even after the end of the project?

EQ 4.1.a. What are the key risks which may affect the sustainability of the project benefits in terms of economic, environmental, institutional and social sustainability?

Finding 32. Although the supported vegetable gardens were found to be the project's most impactful interventions, their economic potential could be delayed without ensuring access to markets (linkages, transport, value addition, warehouses).

104. Key risks that may impact the economic benefits that came from the project include a lack of markets to sell the produce. This was an issue across all ten of the supported vegetable gardens. Market access and warehouse availability, particularly cold storage facilities, were repeatedly and pointedly requested by female growers. Most complained about the distance to the nearest markets, including the *lumos*, which are weekly open markets held in strategic locations across the country (Lower River, North Bank, Central River, Upper River). Also, the high level of existing market glut made it extremely difficult to earn good sales from the produce. Much of the produce is either sold at a lower price, taken home or even left to rot, resulting in post-harvest losses. The implementation and operationalization of the exit strategy outlines the roles of the different stakeholders, including the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment. According to the project team, the exit strategy contributed to the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment's strategies to create market linkages for the women gardeners. This is key but could not be verified by the Evaluation Team.
105. Not much was mentioned about environmental risks since all of the gardens use organic farming methods as a climate-resilient and an environmentally friendly approach. However, some gardens have poor ground levelling. This led to severe erosion and affected some of the beds downstream, for example, at Juffureh. This could have been averted with proper ground levelling. If impossible to reverse, further erosion could at least be stopped.
106. Institutional and social risk factors entirely depend on the level of organization, unity, cooperation and cohesion among the different community groups and institutions and the strength of their leadership. The ownership of project initiatives should be made clear from the start. This could avoid any hijacking or side-lining from other factions or groups within the same communities. One example involves Kunjo, where some community factions saw the vegetable garden as theirs while others were denied access and participation (Mandingoes versus other ethnic groups). Such situations, if not properly addressed, could lead to social friction among groups. It could even lead to maladaptation since such

² Currently, the implementing partners are requested to provide technical specifications before bids are launched and are consulted in the development of work plans according to the project team. Further, joint monitoring and supervisory visits are done with partners and reports, and lessons learned are shared with the implementing partners. The evaluation found the demand for earlier and more systematic implementing partner involvement – from implementing partners themselves – noteworthy.

projects are meant to bring unity and social cohesion. In this case, it is important to note that the Agribusiness Services unit under the Ministry of Agriculture, which was one of the implementing partners, coordinated the site identification of the vegetable gardens – not FAO. Further, the group within the community bought the land at GMD 50 000 (USD 1 000). Membership to the garden can therefore be decided upon by the group that had invested in the garden's establishment.

EQ 4.1.b. Have issues of sustainability been sufficiently planned and managed within the project context to mitigate the identified risks?

Finding 33. A number of risk mitigation strategies were employed by the project to ensure sustainable interventions. Some strategies have yet to be fully realized.

107. Access to markets as an economic risk factor was to be mitigated by transforming the supported vegetable garden groups into agribusiness cooperatives. This aimed to enhance the aggregation of produce for collective marketing. In fact, this would ensure economies of scale and link the produce to interested firms for contract farming or bulk purchasing. However, at the time of the evaluation, these cooperatives had not been fully established, nor had linkages with firms been created.
108. The formation and strengthening of community groups, the identification of project sites and the implementation of subsequent project activities needed the full involvement of the implementing partners and the communities. This should be right from the start and throughout the implementation process. Full community involvement and the leave no one behind principle built solid foundations to sustain the initiated ventures in most communities. The promotion of organic farming was a very effective mitigation and adaptation measure. In fact, it contributed to the sustainability of the respective interventions, especially the vegetable gardens and farm yards.

EQ 4.1.c. To what extent is this project likely to build upon results achieved at the country level, particularly in light of the new GEF financing cycle (GEF-8) or through other potential donors?

Finding 34. The project built on gains that had been made at the country level, especially in terms of institutional strengthening at the national and community level. This, however, must be further expanded if it is to ensure sustainability.

109. The ability and willingness of community group members to pay for the contributions, subscriptions, levies or fines, and to abide by the agreed upon rules and regulations is crucial in maintaining peace, harmony and social co-existence, as well as ensuring the sustainability of gains.
110. Strategies supported the marketing of garden produce. These have yet to effectively start due to implementation delays. Regardless, key activities like registering groups as cooperatives, business plan development and opening bank accounts started in 2018. A convergence between the growers and vendors was recently held to bridge this gap.
111. The identification of communities and groups in which to work with was a collaborative process. It involved key institutions at the national, regional and community level. This grounded the project in strong institutional and local community structures. Kunjo was an exception and needs urgent attention (see paragraph 106).
112. The project aligned overtime and across the GEF funding cycles (GEF-5, GEF-6, GEF-7). Project gains can also be built into GEF-8 as this cycle is about to begin. This will make it

- even more relevant to the country context and therefore justifies the need for realignment. There is a need to maintain the dynamics that were created at both the institutional and community level. Extension staff at the local level should continue to transfer knowledge, skills and experience, and provide other services with relevant government departments. This involves planned activities in their budget lines to enhance local implementation and actions. This implies that government departments and institutions take on relevant, key activities and include these in their budget lines to sustain gains made and results achieved.
113. Exit strategy dialogues must change mindsets. The projects on the ground should be seen as government interventions where the relevant departments and institutions have lead roles. The project must be handed over to such government departments, counterparts or implementing partners for continuity. This will build the required capacity of such institutions over the project's lifetime. For the vegetable gardens, the work plans and activities of the Horticulture Technology Services under the Department of Agriculture should incorporate such activities. There is a dire need to build synergy and piggyback on other institutions and interventions to avoid duplication. The Department of Agriculture must be committed to support the gardens. The Regional Directors of Agriculture have key roles in this, as well as the extension staff. The latter have motor bikes and regularly monitor the gardens. These dialogues have yet to begin and bear fruit.
114. To sustain the NEA laboratory, the management outsourced funding from another project for the procurement of consumables. There was also a two-week advanced training programme for the staff (USD 20 000). The NEA, as a partner institution, also bought and installed a transformer and solar backup system for the laboratory to mitigate a low and irregular power supply from the main grid. Currently, the management is working to make the laboratory operational by enhancing capacity. The NEA laboratory has opportunities to conduct specific tests for the member states of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel. The Gambia could also benefit from being a member of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.³ The Gambia was also represented by the NEA in the Hazardous Chemicals Act (Parliament of the Gambia, 1994) related to the management bond from 2013 to 2019. This was attended to once in 2021 and twice in 2022. All of these initiatives provide a solid foundation for the sustainability of the laboratory and its facilities.
115. All community gardens groups have sustainability measures: membership subscriptions; the levying of fees for services rendered at the gardens for every production cycle; the use of power tillers for paid ploughing services; and fines. These are all income sources to enhance the smooth operations of the gardens, even after project closure. The groups also charge membership fees and have laid down rules and procedures to enhance the smooth operation and management of the gardens. A significant number of these garden groups also opened bank accounts to save for any future maintenance costs and or expansion needs, if and when necessary. Groups like that of Lamin Koto currently have over GMD 1 000 000 in their bank account, and Juffureh has a balance of over GMD 20 000. Besides the group accounts, some individual members also have their own bank accounts where they save monies that come from the vegetable production activities. At Kunjo, the land for the vegetable garden was bought by the group for GMD 50 000. This clearly

³ The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants addresses waste management and provides sound chemical management. The Gambia, as party to the convention, could benefit from waste management practices, especially in cases of open waste burning that include Unintentional Persistent Organic Pollutants.

demonstrated the group's capacity and commitment to work on the garden now and in the future. From the same garden, they realized GMD 1.3 million from four production cycles (completed in November 2022). This also shows the viability of the venture in this community, which could easily be sustained even after project closure.

116. The central management committees of the cluster communities of the respective beneficiary animal drinking points and stock routes have plans to levy fees for each animal. Facilities will be used to generate income for future maintenance that includes boreholes, accessories, stock routes, deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens when fully complete. This needs to be agreed upon at meetings that are organized by the cluster committees of the respective communities.
117. The established committees of the various community infrastructures and activities should be fully trained on maintenance and management. This will make them more viable. This involves, for example, animal drinking points and accessories, vegetable gardens, water facilities, deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens, rice fields, beekeeping, and poultry and small ruminants. It is also important that land ownership issues are clarified and fully documented with communities before any civil engineering work begins. This is to avoid conflict.
118. Most activities for many government institutions like the Department of Agriculture are project led. This is because they do not have enough funds or resources to carry them out in an autonomous way. In view of this, support for extension staff may stop or be significantly reduced after project closure. This could lead to a reduction in the number of contact hours between farmers and extension staff. According to the extension strategy (internal document), the current extension staff member-farmer ratio is about 1:1 536. Given the resource constraints, FFS should be fully embraced to reduce supervision by the extension staff, especially after project closure.
119. There is the need to build on the project's generated outputs and results. These should be handed over to relevant institutions for continuity. In fact, they can be linked to other relevant projects to fill the gaps as a way forward. Most national-level committees and taskforces lack funding, so there is no viable coordination of activities. There is a need to embed projects in terms of institutional activities to ensure government control and sustainability. Project implementation frameworks need proper review and alignment with relevant institutional strategic plans to ensure sustainability. Government institutions need to see themselves clearly in the project design and implementation frameworks and strategies to ensure sustainability. High expertise to maintain infrastructure, for instance, should come from government-level national counterparts who must see themselves as fully involved in ownership. Because of this, the project engaged the implementing partners and the communities in the development and validation of the exit strategy to collectively agree upon what needs to be done and clarify the roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders.
120. Farmer organizations like the National Coordinating Organization for Farmers Association in the Gambia are instrumental in ensuring continuity after project closure. This is based on their experience from other projects like the National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project, the Participatory Integrated Watershed Management Project, the Strengthening Climate Resilience of the National Agricultural Land and Water Management Development Project, the Programme to Build Resilience to Food and

Nutrition Insecurity in the Sahel, and ROOTS. However, there are usually special components for farmer organizations through such projects in terms of strengthening institutional capacities to enhance effective monitoring. Except for the project steering committee, no joint monitoring was held with the implementing partners or other stakeholders. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have repeatedly shown an ability and willingness to engage in such joint monitoring. It is worth applying this to the project context.

121. FAO looks more government-focused under the eyes of farmer organizations. The National Coordinating Organization for Farmers Association in the Gambia, as an umbrella farmer organization, has had discussions with FAO to express its position and role. The National Coordinating Organization for Farmers Association in the Gambia also has external contacts and linkages like the Network of Farmer Organizations and Agricultural Producers in West Africa at the regional level. In addition, projects that are similar to this one could support and continue the initiatives after exit. Overall, the project is deemed fairly sustainable. However, the ownership of farmer organizations is essential. This involves their participation level, the development of local sustainable strategies, and resource mobilization and training programmes to consolidate gains made.
122. It important to explore how the project will continue to support the government through initiatives like the Forest and Farm Facility. This will strengthen the communities that benefit from the project. The LsEbA project also implements a similar adaptation project. It is worth communicating gains and lessons with the LsEbA project. The NARI also works on agroforestry issues. These are all means for national partners to take stock of project gains. The new biennium funds also support a national forest assessment (approximately USD 400 000), which will also take stock of and work on woodlots. As mentioned, the GEF-8 cycle is reaching out through a national dialogue and developing concept notes to build on learnings and consolidate gains made.

In view of this analysis, the project's sustainability is rated as Moderate Likely (ML).

3.5 Factors affecting performance

3.5.1 Implementation

EQ 5.1.a. To what extent did FAO deliver on project identification, concept preparation, appraisal preparation, approval and start up, oversight and supervision?

Finding 35. The different stages of the project cycle (from identification to oversight and supervision) were satisfactorily delivered by FAO, even though there were delays in activity implementation due to the slow nature of procurement.

123. Overall, FAO effectively and efficiently delivered on project identification, concept preparation, appraisal, preparation, approval and start up, oversight and supervision activities. Project identification was done in consultation with key stakeholders, including the government and relevant ministries, departments and agencies as key implementing partners. The communities were also involved in the consultation processes, which informed the project identification, concept preparation, appraisal, and preparation stages.
124. The project had two management phases. The first Project Coordinator resigned in February 2021. It took almost one year before his replacement was in place (November 2021). This contributed to delays in implementing some of the planned activities, especially

under the livestock component. The project's Finance Officer was in charge during this lapse. The M&E (February 2020) and Procurement Officers (from November 2021 to January 2022) also came on board at a later stage. There were serious delays in the procurement processes and, in some cases, the approval process of the letters of agreement. As a result, most activities suffered delays or were not implemented at all. Equally, risks around inflation-driven commodity price hikes had not been factored into such letters of agreement. This created difficulties in implementing some activities, such as the construction of two multipurpose centres. Some contractors were affected when it came to the civil engineering work, for example, the Kansala Company, which was given the contract for the multipurpose centres in Kwonkuba and Kerewan Nyakoi.

125. There was significant progress in project implementation upon recruitment of the second Project Coordinator, especially for the livestock component. There is still more to be done, however, as the project comes to a close in October 2023. The work planning processes are deemed adequate for effective and regular communication and collaboration among the PMU, the implementing partners, and staff from FAO in the Gambia, the FAO Regional Office for Africa and FAO headquarters. This facilitated implementation. All stakeholders stated that reporting lines and decision-making were both transparent and timely. The main implementation obstacle was the protracted nature of the procurement process: external stakeholders, particularly the implementing partners regret that FAO itself needs to fully own the procurement instead of delegating part of this to them. The only means to address this situation during implementation was constant communication among the FLO, the LTO and key FAO in the Gambia personnel with the procurement office. Alternative arrangements could at least be considered in any future project of this nature.
126. The LTO for the project has been involved since the beginning and even contributed to drafting the project document (FAO, 2016a). He reviewed and managed project deliverables such as reports, requests and procurement documents, and had close relationships with the in-country project team. Telephone, email and WhatsApp exchanges helped him stay abreast with prevailing conditions in the field. Problems and successes could be shared as implementation progressed, even though he was not physically present due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and other duties. He also advised the project team to record achievements through videos, pictures and storytelling to demonstrate realities on the ground. This enabled the FAO team to identify risks and address these in a timely manner. A key example was the drilling of a second borehole at the Wassu vegetable garden since the first one was not good enough. If not, this garden would still not have been operational.
127. There were significant delays in project execution from the perspective of both the FLO and the LTO. There is a need to fast track different strategies for the country management team to complete urgent, pending activities. Key among these is the slow procurement process that negatively impacted performance. This creates the need for strong and timely actions be taken at both FAO headquarters and FAO in the Gambia. Everyone should understand the urgency of the remaining tasks and support the country team to accelerate the process for all civil engineering work to be completed before project closure.
128. It was further argued that staff in charge of reviewing procurement requests at FAO should organize field visits to grasp the activities, especially those related to procurement. Being based in Rome does not provide them with enough information to assess the requests in relation to realities on the ground. The field exposure and the experience derived from such

an exposure will help them understand and appreciate what happens in the field. This will further encourage and accelerate purchases and could avoid delays in activity implementation.

EQ 5.1.b. How well were risks identified and managed?

Finding 36. Risks associated with the project were identified on time and effectively managed by staff from FAO in the Gambia, the FAO Regional Office for Africa, the project steering committee, and the project management team due to their constant and regular oversight and supervision.

129. The regular and constant oversight by staff from FAO in the Gambia, the LTO, the FLO, the project steering committee and members of the relevant taskforces enabled risks to be identified on time. There was constant and regular communication among the LTO, project personnel from FAO in the Gambia and project steering committee members regarding the planned deliverables vis-à-vis achievements. This involved the timely identification and provision of mitigation measures for any risks, challenges or constraints experienced along the way. This was possible due to the regular sharing of reports, requests, other documentation, WhatsApp communication, email and telephone messages, as well as documentaries, photographs, storytelling and video clips developed during M&E activities and shared accordingly. This enabled project staff and relevant key stakeholders within and outside FAO to timely identify and effectively manage risks as they unfold.
130. Typical among these was the need to drill a second borehole at the Wassu vegetable garden because the first one was not good enough. Otherwise, this garden would still be non-operational. Also, the need to shift from land development to land rehabilitation at the Kuntaur Fulla Kunda rice fields as the most cost-effective and efficient measure came about due to constant oversight and monitoring by the project steering committee. This project activity, however, has yet to be fully accomplished. It is equally important to note that the risks around inflation-driven commodity price hikes under long procurement processes were not factored into the letters of agreement. This led to difficulties in implementing some planned activities, for example, the construction of the two multipurpose centres. Contractors like the Kansala Company were affected since they were given the civil engineering contract for the Kuwonkuba and Kerewan Nyakoi multipurpose centres.

EQ 5.1.c. To what extent were responsibilities delineated and implemented in a complementary manner among the implementing partners?

Finding 37. Responsibilities were delineated among project implementing partners with each delivering on their mandate. However, this was done in isolation rather than a complementary manner. This was a missed opportunity for providing a holistic view of project performance and ensuring mutual backup support for sustainability.

131. The project was able to effectively delineate responsibilities among implementing partners based on their areas of competence (experience, knowledge, capacity to deliver). The NARI addressed research, disseminated findings and trained farm communities in the project intervention regions. The Agribusiness Services, the Horticulture Technical Services and the Food Technology Services under the Department of Agriculture were involved in training programmes related to their mandates and areas of expertise within the project context and jurisdiction. The Department of Agriculture and the Department of Livestock Services were both responsible for providing relevant technical advice, supervision and training through the regional directorates and the extension network. Others included the NEA for

the laboratory operations at their office, NDMA for the operationalization of the early warning strategy and national disaster policy, and the Department of Water Resources for the dissemination of climate information to the farming communities. However, based on the findings, no joint monitoring activities were reported between and among the implementing partners. This was a missed opportunity as it could have enhanced a stronger complementarity between activities from the designated implementing partners and further provided a holistic overview of project performance and quality. It also could have provided a strong foundation for continuity after project closure.

EQ 5.1.d. What challenges were encountered in the implementation of project activities? How did these impact project outputs, and how were they addressed?

Finding 38. Key challenges led to implementation delays. This included the project's late start and drawn out procurement processes for some of the planned activities. In addition, marketing and storage constraints for female vegetable growers and the single sourcing of a contractor for some civil engineering work also negatively impacted project performance.

132. The project started late in 2018 instead of 2017 as planned. This impacted the timely implementation of some project activities. The livestock component was delayed until 2021 while others like crops and vegetable gardens were implemented. This left most of the planned livestock-support activities incomplete, including cattle drinking points, stock routes, intensive feed gardens, and deferred grazing areas. There were also delays in the provision of poultry and small ruminants for the target communities, even though some communities had already provided space and facilities for them. However, there was a swift turn around in the rate of implementation for most of the pending activities following the recruitment of the second Project Coordinator and other staff. Guidance from the project steering committee, FAO in the Gambia, the implementing partners and the communities further supported this aspect.
133. Drawn out procurement processes led to many delays in the implementation of other planned activities: land rehabilitation in Kuntaur Fulla Kunda; and the purchase of equipment, tools, machines and other materials for the subcomponents and the related civil engineering work. Some of the contractors for the civil engineering work were negatively affected due to inflation-driven price hikes on some materials and equipment. The single sourcing of a contractor to construct the multipurpose centres, including toilets at the project intervention sites, caused further delay.
134. The poultry and vegetable farmers also reported marketing constraints and a lack of warehouses with cooling facilities. The latter would have enhanced proper and safe storage, preservation, sorting, grading and the possible aggregation of poultry products and vegetables for economies of scale.

EQ 5.1.e. What could have been done differently to improve project performance?

Finding 39. The involvement of the implementing partners and the communities in the procurement process would have been highly preferred. The proper activation of co-financing arrangements and the timely development of an exit strategy also would have been advantageous. Further, an integrated and holistic implementation approach could have been employed to ensure mutual reinforcement and support within and among various components.

135. Besides expedited, the procurement process could have been more inclusive. The drawn out procurement process ensured cost-effectiveness and efficiency with due diligence but

slowed progress in implementing a series of activities. FAO can find a way to fully engage the implementing partners and the communities in the procurement activities. This would have nurtured a sense of ownership and commitment across the board. The project steering committee, the NTAT and the RTAT could have been more activated to ensure that regular meetings, monitoring and reporting are highly maintained. Considering the complex and inter-related nature of the adaptation measures within the project context, an integrated, holistic implementation approach could have been employed to ensure mutual support within and among various components rather than concentrate on one at the expense of others. This unfortunate situation really affected Component 2.

136. Project phase in and phase out could have been thoroughly and inclusively developed to involve the implementing partners, the communities and other key stakeholders. It could have been possible to review, commit to and sign off right at the early stage of project initiation. This could have outlined clear roles, responsibilities and co-financing arrangements based on realities on the ground, considering the duration and status of other projects as leverage.

3.5.2 Execution

EQ 5.2.a. To what extent did the execution agency effectively discharge its role and responsibilities related to the management and administration of the project?

EQ 5.2.b. Have issues of joint programming between and among the implementing partners been sufficiently addressed to create synergy and avoid the duplication of efforts/resources?

Finding 40. FAO, as the executing agency, effectively discharged its roles and responsibilities in the management and administration of the project by quickly identifying and addressing challenges as they emerged. However, to a certain extent, FAO was seen as stepping into the domains of the implementing partners instead of solely focusing on its fiduciary role. Rather, FAO could have encouraged joint programming between and among the implementing partners.

137. As reported, the project had two management phases. The first Project Coordinator resigned in February 2021. It took almost one year before his replacement was in place (November 2021). This delayed the implementation of some key activities, specifically the procurement-related ones. However, there was significant implementation progress after the recruitment of the second Project Coordinator.
138. FAO, as the executing agency, had a firm grip on the project and ensured that the planned activities were implemented accordingly and in consultation with the implementing partners. However, some implementing partners were of the view that FAO was actually implementing activities instead of allowing them to take on this role. From their perspective, FAO should focus on its executing and fiduciary responsibilities rather than act as an implementing agency. With support from the project steering committee, FAO was able to develop an exit strategy for the project. This was reviewed and validated at a stakeholder meeting. It clearly delineated the implementing partner roles and responsibilities to ensure the continuity of initiated project activities. However, the level of commitment and resource capacity of the respective implementing partners in absorbing, integrating and mainstreaming relevant project activities under their domain had yet to be fully established by the June 2023 closure date.
139. There was not enough joint programming among the implementing partners. Individual implementing partners were assigned specific activities related to their areas of expertise,

which were mainly dictated by letters of agreement. Regional technical advisory committees could have been instrumental in organizing synergies across the partners.

EQ 5.2.c. What challenges were encountered in project execution? What was their impact, and how were these resolved by the executing agency?

EQ 5.2.d. Any ideas or suggestions to improve the execution rate of this and/or future projects of this nature?

140. As reported, slow procurement processes for goods and services led to implementation delays. This was the main challenge. FAO in the Gambia was able to engage the FAO Regional Office for Africa and FAO headquarters to get things done in the quickest way possible. The inflation-driven price hikes of some materials and equipment was another challenge as it negatively impacted the contracted civil engineering work. However, FAO was able to discuss and reach an agreement with these contractors on a way forward. Difficulty in getting some of the implementing partners to submit their reports on time was another key challenge. FAO addressed this by ensuring that no new disbursements were made to the implementing partners unless the previous ones had been fully reconciled with reports submitted.

Finding 41. The slow procurement process and FAO's direct involvement in implementation impacted the ability for the implementing partners and the communities to act effectively and efficiently.

141. The procurement process should be expedited without compromising due diligence to speed up implementation. FAO should avoid direct involvement in on-the-ground activities. Rather, it should empower the implementing partners to do so. This will further push the implementing partners to learn and acquire the necessary space for community ownership. The involvement of the implementing partners and the communities at every stage of the component activities is vital in improving the rate of execution. The project steering committee, the NTAT and the RTAT should all be fully proactive in delivering on their roles and responsibilities. This includes backing FAO in the Gambia with effective oversight, coordination and supervision on behalf of the FLO and LTO at the regional level. Procurement staff, or at least those engaged in procurement issues, should gain field exposure to observe and experience real-life situations at the community level. This may make them understand and appreciate the implications of delayed procurement activities so that they can be avoided.

3.5.3 Monitoring and evaluation system

EQ 5.3.a. M&E design: Was the M&E plan practical and sufficient?

EQ 5.3.b. M&E implementation: Did the M&E system operate as per the M&E plan?

EQ 5.3.c. Was information gathered in a systematic manner, using appropriate methodologies?

EQ 5.3.d. Was the information from the M&E system appropriately used to make timely decisions and foster learning during project implementation (adaptive management)?

Finding 42. The M&E plan and system was indeed quite sufficient and was implemented based on the appropriate project information collected, analysed and disseminated. This facilitated informed decision-making and continuous learning. However, key among the weaknesses was the delayed submission of reports by the implementing partners.

142. An M&E system was in place and backed by an M&E plan with the Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool being strictly followed and updated accordingly. The M&E system had a holistic M&E plan detailing the results matrix (for example, clearly defined outcomes, indicators and end targets), indicator tracking tools, data collection methods, roles and responsibilities, and mandatory reports. The baseline study of the project was conducted using a SHARP+ methodology. As mentioned, an exit strategy for the project was also collectively developed and validated by the implementing partners in collaboration with key stakeholders and community representatives. However, the exit strategy was not fully operational at the time of the evaluation. Good practices, success stories and factsheets were also documented and disseminated.
143. A project steering committee, the NTAT and the RTAT were all established. The project steering committee and the PMU held meetings and organized monitoring trips at the sites. Reports were then generated to inform decision-making. However, the NTAT and the RTAT were not as active as expected. Resources for the M&E activities were readily available and plans were executed without many challenges.
144. The PIR was the mandatory reporting tool of the donor. It was strictly adhered to using information that was generated during the M&E supervisory visits and reports from the implementing partners. Key tasks that were accomplished on information collection and reporting are outlined in the following points:
- i. Prepared and submitted annual PIRs, which covers July (the current year) to June (the following year) – these reports show the current year, as well as cumulative achievements and ratings against the project's end targets.
 - ii. Prepared and submitted semi-annual PPRs (from January to June and from July to December) for FAO headquarters – these also detail achievements during the said periods and cumulative achievements against the project's end targets.
 - iii. Prepared and submitted monthly progress reports to management at the FAO Country Office – these include recommendations on a way forward.
 - iv. Reviewed annual work plans and prepared semi-annual reports – these include ratings on the status of planned activities.
 - v. Conducted periodic monitoring missions to the intervention sites and submitted reports on the status of project delivery – these flag challenges and provide key recommendations to ensure the timely achievement of the project's end targets.
 - vi. Updated FAO Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS) – this includes achievements against the project's end targets.
145. However, a key reporting challenge was the fact that the implementing partners were late in sharing reports on letters of agreement with the PMU. This involved training reports from the implementing partners with some data that had not been disaggregated and a tendency to report on the same issues several times. There was an inability to conduct an impact assessment on the trainings (for example, food processing, honey production, value-added activities). This is because most of them were conducted when the required inputs were not available. In fact, this stemmed from the late completion of community gardens and the recent establishment of beekeeping and poultry activities.

146. Information from the M&E system was effectively used to inform decision-making as and foster learning and sharing among key project partners and other stakeholders, including FAO, the Government of the Gambia and the communities. The PIRs, the PPRs and the work plans and reports generated from the monitoring missions were all used as inputs to update FAO's FPMIS with achievements against the project's end targets that enhanced adaptive management.

EQ 5.3.e. How effective has the reporting system been in terms of quality, timeliness and feedback mechanisms?

EQ 5.3.f. What would you consider as the key weakness/es of the M&E and reporting system, and how could these be resolved?

147. As highlighted, the project followed FAO reporting processes. It prepared the PIRs and input and updated data in the Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool. However, it was reported that some implementing partners did not submit their reports in a timely manner, especially those related to the letters of agreement. This negatively impacted the reconciliation and timely execution of other planned activities. In effect, there was less feedback to the communities, which is vital to ensure inclusiveness, transparency and accountability in delivering on the project's initiatives.
148. As stated, the late submission of reports by some of the implementing partners and the inability to ensure the reversal of this trend was a major weakness. The project team could have made strict follow ups on the implementing partners. This could have been backed by intensive trainings and coaching on reporting mechanisms within the FAO structure to encourage and support those who lagged behind. Further, the targets for the social media outreach activities could have been jointly planned and executed with both the implementing partners and the communities. This would have gauged the level of achievements and addressed any issues before project closure. The review and reflection processes with the implementing partners and the communities could have been further strengthened and nurtured. Indeed, this could have engendered the self-assessment of progress made, identified key weaknesses and collectively created timely and appropriate solutions that promote adaptive management.

In view of this analysis, the project's M&E is rated as Satisfactory (S).

3.5.4 Financial management and co-financing

EQ 5.4.a. To what extent did the expected co-financing materialize, and how did a shortfall in co-financing affect the project results?

EQ 5.4.b. What could have been done to avoid such shortfalls in co-financing?

EQ 5.4.c. What has been done to bridge the gap created by the shortfall in co-financing, and has this been effective or otherwise?

Finding 43. The project's co-financing arrangements were not on track. This is because most of the potential co-financers had phased out by project launch. In fact, this was partly due to delays in starting the project. This negatively impacted some project activities like land development, even though the project management team took steps to bridge the co-financing gap.

149. A key recommendation from the MTR was for the project management team to effectively track co-financing. This involved following the narrative description within the PIRs, stating

how co-financing contributes to the delivery of project outcomes. As per the project document, co-financing arrangements should have totalled USD 36 830 000 (see Table 3).

Table 3. Co-funding arrangements

FAO/Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (food and agriculture sector development project-technical assistance)	USD 1 400 000
Ministry of Agriculture (food and agriculture sector development project)	USD 14 880 000
Ministry of Agriculture/West Africa Agriculture Productivity Programme	USD 12 000 000
Ministry of Agriculture/H9200	USD 8 550 000
Co-financing subtotal	USD 36 830 000

Source: FAO. 2020. *Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia – Mid-term review*. Rome.

150. Findings from the available literature show that the project's co-financing status was not on track. As reported by the project management team and accordingly to the June 2022 PIR, most of the proposed projects meant for co-financing had been phased out at the initial stage of project implementation – even though the project leveraged on the existing structures in the intervention regions. The project was seriously delayed, and most of the land development initiatives were either delayed or not implemented. Although the co-financing was supposed to be in-kind, this, to a great extent, negatively impacted project performance due to the unavailability of funds for certain key activities like land development and civil engineering. However, by the end of June 2022, the following additional financiers actually provided finance under the co-financing arrangements for a total of USD 1 814 422.16. The next points break down this amount.
- i. Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security/Nutrition to Mitigate Migration Flows (European Union): USD 624 028.88 (envelope A) with an expected total disbursement of USD 1 000 000 by project closure. This funded the construction of access roads to three community gardens: Genji Wolof; Kerewan Nyakoi; and Kwonkuba. It aimed to improve market access for their horticultural produce. The same project also posted four extension staff at two gardens, Kunjo and Kerr Selleh, to advise farmers and train the garden beneficiaries.
 - ii. Improving Food Security and Nutrition in the Gambia through Food Fortification (European Union): USD 190 393.28. This was the actual, expected total disbursement by project closure. This project supported farmers with livestock production in the project's intervention regions and complemented other efforts in the area.
 - iii. The Ministry of Agriculture (Government of the Gambia): USD 1 000 000. The expected total disbursement by project closure was USD 1 250 000. The Government of the Gambia committed significant in-kind contributions: time spent by the public implementing partners on project activities; the allocation of office space; the use of equipment and mobility during consultations; monitoring; and trainings from project launch to now.
151. It can be deduced that only the European Union-funded Improving Food Security and Nutrition in the Gambia through Food Fortification project provided co-financing while the other European Union-funded Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security/Nutrition to Mitigate Migration Flows still has to disburse USD 375 971.12 to the project. Similarly, the Ministry of Agriculture has yet to disburse an expected USD 250 000 to the project in order to fulfil its co-financing commitments.

152. The project could have started on time to leverage the co-financing of the then operating projects before closure. Proper and effective arrangements could have been done with prospective co-financing institutions or projects with detailed plans on the volume of co-financing, the required modalities and timelines. Regular and timely engagements can ensure proper monitoring and reporting on these plans. There could have been more engagement to ensure the commitments to the agreed upon co-financing arrangements, particularly on the side of the Government of the Gambia, that is, the Ministry of Agriculture. Also, the possibility of forging effective linkages between this project and other initiatives like ROOTS and the LsEbA project could have been explored.
153. Some of the planned activities like the establishment of stock routes and cattle drinking points were co-shared with GCP/GAM/031/GFF, while others like access road construction and livestock support benefitted from those that had been identified as co-financing institutions (envelope A and the food fortification projects). The Government of the Gambia, through the implementing partners, continues to provide office space, staff time, extension advice, and mobility and material support as part of the co-financing arrangements.
154. In view of this analysis, and as the evaluation found through discussions with the project team and the co-financing partners, the remaining balances are likely to be fulfilled.

The project is rated as Satisfactory (S) in terms of financial management and co-financing.

3.5.5 Project partnership and stakeholder engagement

EQ 5.5.a. Were other actors such as civil society, Indigenous Peoples or the private sector involved in project design or implementation, and what was the effect on the project results?

EQ 5.5.b. How would you gauge such partnerships and reasons for such a rating?

EQ 5.5.c. How could such partnerships/stakeholder engagements be further strengthened to ensure the sustainability of project gains?

Finding 44. Besides the implementing partners, two civil society organizations, community groups and private-sector contractors were involved in both the design and implementation of project activities. As underscored, FAO could have focused more on its fiduciary role while providing technical support and advice to other stakeholders in implementing the planned activities. The exit strategy could have been effectively activated as a vehicle to enhance this process.

155. The project forged partnerships with key implementing agencies and institutions, including: the Ministry of Agriculture; the Department of Agriculture; the Department of Livestock Services; the Department of Water Resources; the NEA; and NARI. This involved the communities where project activities were implemented. The roles and responsibilities of these partners were clearly delineated in the project document and the stakeholder engagement plan. Each of these implementing partners were engaged with depending on the implementation of planned activities that were relevant to their area of operation. Some civil society organizations like the National Livestock Owners Association were also engaged in the implementation of relevant planned activities, for example, the training of cattle herders on bushfire prevention and management. Other civil society organizations like the National Coordinating Organization for Farmers Association in the Gambia were active members of the project steering committee and also attended certain activities like stakeholder forums, workshops and meetings.

156. Engagement with the key implementing partners took place mainly through the implementation of letters of agreement followed by concept notes based on key activities under their purview. However, the majority of the implementing partners found the preparation, submission, review and approval of the concept notes to be quite cumbersome and time consuming. This eventually led to delays in implementing activities. Some implementing partners and stakeholders noted that, while FAO took the lead in implementing activities at the field level with support from the implementing partners, the inverse arrangement may have been more beneficial. Most of the implementing partners viewed FAO as both an executing and implementing agency, and this did not resonate well with them. In fact, they perceive a conflict of interest as the same agency seems to act as both referee and player. A more thorough explanatory talk between FAO and the implementing partners could both mitigate this perception (FAO acting within its mandate and role as per the project document) and allow for a different arrangement.
157. The private sector was also engaged with through contractual agreements for civil engineering work. FAO developed and signed contracts with these private agencies or firms to enhance the following: the construction of garden fences; the drilling of boreholes; the provision of elevated water tanks with solar-powered water reticulation systems; the construction of reservoirs; multipurpose centres; the provision of milling machines; the supply of garden equipment; beekeeping equipment, gear, hives and catcher boxes; and materials for poultry and small ruminants.
158. Project partnerships established at both the level of the implementing partners and the contractors were quite satisfactory. Clear roles and responsibilities or well-processed and fully documented contractual arrangements were accomplished. Aside from late reports, the implementing partners indeed performed well in delivering on their respective mandates. At the same time, FAO in the Gambia and the FAO Regional Office for Africa provided the necessary policy, technical guidance and financial support in delivering on the project objectives. The contractors also delivered well, except for a few cases in which one or two civil engineering contracts experienced challenges due to inflation-driven price hikes on commodities, materials and equipment alongside poor quality work.
159. A critical step involves developing an exit strategy with the full involvement of all key partners and stakeholders. This was accomplished. However, the push for a concrete plan of action on how to make the exit strategy operational is still needed. This would entail clear timelines and the identification of institutions that need to be accountable for delivery. Perhaps FAO could, depending on available funds, further assess and build the capacities (technical, material, financial) of the various government institutions that serve as implementing partners. In fact, FAO could offer a role so that these partners can take on key activities and sustain the project gains. Most importantly, this should include a sustainable path at the community level. Involvement and commitment from both the implementing partners and the communities would be defined with clear roles and responsibilities.

In view of this analysis, the project is rated as Satisfactory (S) in terms of partnership and stakeholder engagement.

3.5.6 Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products

EQ 5.6.a. How is the project assessing, documenting and sharing its results, lessons learned and experiences?

EQ 5.6.b. To what extent are communications products and activities likely to support the sustainability and scaling up of project results?

EQ 5.6.c. Have there been any communication barriers? How did these impact the project, and how were these addressed?

Finding 45. Communications and knowledge management were enhanced through the development and operationalization of a communications strategy. Knowledge products were developed and disseminated using various channels of communication. However, the knowledge products generated were not translated into local languages for wider readership, understanding, learning and appreciation by the project beneficiaries. Community review and reflection sessions on such knowledge products could have helped this process.

160. Good practices, success stories, documentaries and factsheets were prepared and widely disseminated. In addition, 20 billboards were strategically mounted at the project sites to enhance knowledge sharing and visibility: ten gardens and ten livestock watering points. A documentary on project-supported solar-powered irrigation systems was also presented at the World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal in 2022, which generated interest in climate adaptation work in the Gambia. In fact, many forum participants requested further engagement to replicate such practices in their respective countries.
161. It is important to note that the project did not have a strategy on documenting project achievements. However, the formation and effective utilization of a WhatsApp group by the project and its beneficiaries, training manuals and back-to-office-reports enhanced effective communications, knowledge sharing and learning. The WhatsApp group had over 70 members from all project intervention sites. It was used to disseminate information, update members on progress at the different sites and enhance the sharing of knowledge and experiences on various adaptation measures to climate change and variability. Every Thursday, a topic was proposed. An expert in the field was then identified to share their knowledge on the topic. This was often done through voice messages, videos and photographs. Topics ranged from food processing, nursery bed preparation, poultry management, beekeeping, gender, group management and leadership skills.
162. Overall, significant strides were made to enhance project visibility through various communications activities such as social media posts and global stories for targeted audiences. The project developed a communications strategy to effectively communicate and promote its interventions and achievements. This way, it could build trust among the donor and target audiences and position FAO as the best partner for change. It also aimed to improve documentation and the dissemination of good practices, success stories and human interest stories by highlighting on-the-ground impact and the return on investment for donors. This included multimedia communications products. The strategy also intended to support advocacy, campaigns and public communications activities. A project newsletter was uploaded to FAO's publications page, highlighting successes and activities in 2021. A project-specific factsheet was also put on FAO's publications page, highlighting key project details and successes. Both the newsletter and the factsheet were periodically promoted on social media accounts, leveraging relevant United Nations practices.

Figure 2. Project success story



Cheerful vegetable garden members advocate for food self-sufficiency in Kuwonku. The project-supported vegetable garden is an answered prayer for the community of Kuwonkuba

163. "FAO brought us something we have wanted since 1992, and we will forever remain grateful," said Mba Kumba Touray, garden committee president. Kwonkuba is a village in the Missira Ward of the Sandu District in Upper River. The community of Kwonkuba is one of ten communities that benefitted from a 5 ha garden that had been established by FAO through this GEF-funded project. Jalamang Touray, garden committee secretary, is among many beneficiaries who feel that the garden is an answered prayer. He recalls how it all began in 1992: one fine day, he was sitting with his friends under a tree brewing *attaya*, Gambian tea, when they saw some women from a nearby village selling onions to the women of their village. Instead of trading money for the onions, the female vendors demanded groundnuts. The men knew this was an unfair trade but could do little about it: the women in their village needed onions to cook their meals. "It was then that we decided to come together to help the women from our village have their own vegetable garden," Jalamang recalls.
164. To create a garden for the women, the community erected a fence from local materials and dug wells through personal labour and funds mobilized by members. Later, a non-governmental organization assisted with barbed wire fencing and a number of concrete-lined wells. Although they were determined to produce vegetables, the community had limited knowledge on vegetable production. No standard beds, frequent flooding of the garden and animal invasion was the order of the day until FAO intervened in 2018 to set up the project-supported garden.
165. Jalamang claimed that there had been a noticeable improvement in the lives and welfare of the community members since the establishment of the project-supported garden in their village in 2019. He noted that the project not only improved the garden but also facilitated trainings on good horticultural practices and cooperative management. He added that the project facilitated the training of three of their members as FFS facilitators. These facilitators played instrumental roles in providing good guidance and advice on climate-smart agriculture.
166. The garden now has 352 members, seven of whom are males. Each member has six beds on which they cultivate. The vegetables they cultivate include onions, tomatoes, garden eggs, bitter tomatoes, cabbage, okra, lettuce and potatoes.

167. “We are so grateful to FAO because we now produce our vegetables and eat healthy diets. We also make income by selling the excess vegetables,” said Mba Kumba Touray, garden committee president. “The garden has provided health and economic benefits that anyone can see, but it has also created a greater sense of unity and a strong family-like bond within the community,” she added.

Good practices and long-term plan

168. According to Jalamang, the garden committee, like all other established gardens, created rules to help ensure good management for sustainability. In fact, only organic manure was allowed in the garden. The FFS facilitators were always available to help make organic compost. Jalamang explained that each bed uses up to 60 kg of organic manure. That, multiplied by 2 112 beds, is almost 127 t of organic manure for the entire garden.
169. To ensure sustainability of the garden after project closure, Jalamang said that each garden member would contribute GMD 30 every three months. The group then put this into a savings account at the bank. He also added that those who violated garden rules had to pay a fine. All of these funds went into the same account, which became a sort of emergency reserve fund. In the process, more young people were encouraged to join the garden so that they could also nurture a culture of daily gardening. Similar, sustainability strategies were used in all of the other gardens, animal drinking points, stock routes, and beekeeping, animal husbandry and poultry initiatives.

Eat what you grow, and grow what you eat!

170. The community of Kwonkuba developed a policy: Eat what you grow, and grow what you eat. They were optimistic that with the necessary help, they would realize this goal. At Juffureh, they named their garden “Dubai” to evoke the vibrant business centre from the United Arab Emirates. After continually reaching the production targets, the community members said that they are ready to expand and cultivate more. Apart from vegetable production, the community members also engaged in other adaptation measures or income generating ventures like beekeeping, poultry and small ruminants.
171. The project crated a number of documentaries, factsheets, newsletters, Twitter posts and news releases. As highlighted, one example is the documentary on solar-powered irrigation in the Gambia for the World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal. The Communications, Education and Extension Services under the Department of Agriculture also made a documentary on the first vegetable production cycle. It is important to note the communications strategy had no targets for the documentaries, but there was a target to document at least 25 GAPs and lessons learned. Overall, three documentaries were made for the websites and social media accounts, and three newsletters and factsheets were published. There were also Facebook and Twitter updates along with media coverage.
172. The evaluation observed a major communication barrier: less involvement on behalf of the implementing partners and the communities in the procurement process, particularly in the recruitment of contractors and granting contracts. This meant that the implementing partners and the communities had little, if any, identified and agreed upon roles to ensure quality delivery. The implementing partners and the communities should have played active roles in issuing the contracts and delivering on them, especially the civil engineering work. This would have ensured project ownership, commitment and sustainability. Interest

group committees and training them in consultation with the implementing partners on planning, group management, leadership roles, monitoring and record keeping at the community level would go a long way in ensuring their involvement in project activities.

173. There was no indication of organized review and reflection sessions with the implementing partners and the communities apart from the MTR. Regular review and reflection sessions would have been great opportunities for the project staff and FAO to provide periodic information on project achievements, key challenges and lessons learned. In fact, this would have offered a way forward based on feedback from the implementing partners, communities and other stakeholders.

EQ 5.6.d. How were the knowledge products generated and utilized in the project context?

EQ 5.6.e. What could have been done differently to enhance the area of knowledge management and knowledge products?

174. Knowledge products like documentaries, publications, social media posts, success stories and other reports were generated based the implementation of project activities. As indicated, these were effectively compiled and shared with the implementing partners, the communities and the general public to ensure visibility and inform policy decisions. However, considering the low rates of literacy of the target communities, some of the publications could have been translated into one or two local languages to promote greater understanding and attract more readership.
175. Translating some of the documentaries, publications and newsletters into local languages would have supported greater outreach in terms of readership. It also would have promoted greater understanding and generated an appreciation for and belonging to shared issues. Providing feedback sessions, *Bantaba*, on project performance and quality would have enhanced effective learning and sharing. In addition, village or community champions with constructive and innovative ideas based on lessons learned should be identified and encouraged to attract others to join and replicate the adaptation measures. A repository of lessons learned should be compiled and packaged in a way that enhances effective sharing and learning among various audiences: policy makers; implementing partners; FAO; donors; communities; the government; civil society organizations; the private sector; and other stakeholders.

In view of this analysis, the project is rated Satisfactory (S) in terms of communications and knowledge management.

3.6 Environmental and social safeguards

EQ 6.1. To what extent were the ESS taken into account in designing and implementing the project?

EQ 6.1.a. Was an environmental impact and social assessment conducted at the design stage of the project?

EQ 6.1.b. How have the ESS been considered during project implementation?

EQ 6.1.c. How have these ESS impacted project outputs, outcomes and impact?

Finding 46. An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) was conducted at the design stage. The ESS were given due consideration throughout the implementation phase, which had a positive impact on the project activities.

176. In accordance with FAO rules and procedures, there was an ESS screening at the design stage. This aspect was monitored throughout implementation. Organic farming was encouraged and maintained across all of the supported vegetable gardens. In fact, no inorganic chemicals or pesticides were used. Composting and natural solutions were used to drive away insects, as opposed to killing them. This maintained a balance within the existing ecosystem while adapting to climate change and variability. The support to the NEA in upgrading their laboratory will also go a long way in ensuring that the ESS continues. Technical advice and support was also sought during both the design and the establishment of the supported project structures. Indeed, environment and social concerns were kept in mind. In terms of social safeguards, the involvement of beneficiary communities in site identification was significant and reduced potential conflict among the different ethnic groups. This was evident in the supported village gardens, except for Kunjo (see paragraph 106). Site identification for the deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens were also based on ESS protocol. These safeguards, if not followed, could have led to a break in social cohesion that predates the project initiative and would have brewed maladaptation.

In view of this analysis, the project is rated as Satisfactory (S) in terms of the ESS.

3.7 Gender

EQ 6.2. To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing the project? Was the project implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits?

EQ 6.2.a. Has the project been implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits?

EQ 6.2.b. Have there been gender-disaggregated data?

EQ 6.2.c. How have the most vulnerable populations been involved in the project design, implementation and benefits?

EQ 6.2.d. How have the agency of women and youth been built within the project context in terms of their involvement in decision-making and holding leadership positions as key drivers towards building resilience to the impact of climate change and variability?

Finding 47. Gender considerations were considered from design to implementation. Women and youth were highly involved in decision-making and took on leadership roles at both the project and household level. They therefore benefitted from the deliverables. However, the involvement of people with disabilities was insufficient throughout the project.

177. Gender mainstreaming was key in the design. Women, men, youth and the most vulnerable people were engaged to determine their concerns and priorities. This continued during the project implementation phase. In most project activities across all components, except for livestock, which was dominated by men, women took the lead alongside youth. Women held leadership positions in the various community groups and structures that the project worked with, and their involvement ranged from vegetable gardens to beekeeping, poultry and small ruminants.
178. In all of these community structures, women's participation in decision-making was quite dominant. No activities, however, were fully one gender. Individual strengths were used by the community. These leadership roles, which were often new for women, affected the household as women became economically empowered. In fact, they took the initiative to open their own bank accounts. They embraced a savings culture that stemmed from the

project. They used the garden proceeds to supplement "fish money" for their families, take care of family health and school expenses, and purchase key items like beds, cupboards, refrigerators and clothing. They also used this income for traditional, cultural or religious ceremonies. This demonstrates that the project not only provided gender-disaggregated data (see paragraph 181) but also made significant strides to promote and sustain the agency of women, youth and the most vulnerable. Indeed, this aimed to advance their human rights and responsibilities as equal citizens in adapting to climate change and variability, and effectively contribute to the improvement of their own lives and livelihoods.

179. Four gender awareness training programmes were conducted with support from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare staff. These were for project staff and key partners, as well as community members at the various sites. This, to some extent, ingrained gender concerns into the implemented project activities. Nonetheless, there is a need to further promote understanding and strengthen capacities in this vital area.
180. Inclusivity was a major factor from design to implementation. Community members, irrespective of their status as direct beneficiaries, were fully engaged with to determine their own priorities and concerns in adapting to climate change and variability. These were addressed through the implementation of relevant project initiatives and were done in full collaboration with the supported individuals. Crop farmers, especially women, were supported in vegetable production and marketing, and beekeeping, poultry and small ruminants. Herders were supported through the establishment of stock routes and by making water readily available for livestock. Youth (55 percent) were included among the beneficiary crop and livestock farmers. The inclusion of people with disabilities in project activities was not as systematic. This was partly due to the fact that they were less involved in community organizations and groups. Regardless, the project did not target people with disabilities. Going forward, it would be good to engage groups of people with disabilities or support them to form groups that could benefit from other adaptation initiatives.
181. Gender-disaggregated data were collected through M&E processes like the supervisory and monitoring visits, training programmes, production activities and meetings. These were recorded using various types of data collection instruments and techniques, analysed and reported.
182. Overall, the project considered gender, minority and indigenous issues from design to implementation. However, the inclusion of people with disabilities in project activities was not considered. Since individuals with disabilities could be difficult to target, groups of people with disabilities throughout the project sites could be engaged with and supported to further build their resilience. At the same time, this could further ensure gender equality.

In view of this analysis, the project is rated as Satisfactory (S) in terms of gender considerations.

3.8 Lessons learned

EQ 8.1. What are the most critical lessons that have been learned from implementing this project?

EQ 8.1.a. What knowledge has been generated from project results and experiences, which have a wider value and potential for broader application, replication and use?

Finding 48. The way and manner that procurement processes were implemented to ensure due diligence impacted the rate of implementation. Working through community and national

structures, and strengthening such structures, would facilitate project implementation and lead to more effective deliveries and knowledge management.

183. Community groups and farmers, when properly mobilized, sensitized and supported, embrace and commit to adopting climate-resilient adaptation measures for improved lives and livelihoods. Procurement process although mainly geared towards ensuring due diligence when protracted too much could lead to delays in activity implementation and thus impacting negatively on timely delivery of project interventions. Designated implementing partners for project interventions need continuous support (technical, financial, material and motivational) towards ensuring effective project delivery and continuity beyond project closure. Involvement of implementing partners and communities in the procurement processes is critical to ensure ownership, commitment, effective supervision and reporting on civil engineering work implemented at community level. Regular meetings, review and reflection sessions and joint supervisory visits to project sites and provision of necessary feedback goes a long way towards getting fully abreast with project interventions on the ground and at most help to build community/IP trust, commitment and involvement in project activities. This will immensely contribute towards project sustainability. The development, signing and institutionalization of local conventions as well as the establishment of livestock committees in various project intervention sites have been quite instrumental in the management of the livestock subsector and significantly reduced farmer-herder conflict. Such strategies should be replicated in other districts/regions to create harmony between and among the farming and livestock communities across the country.
184. Knowledge gained in organic farming practices including climate-resilient sustainable agriculture, skills in group management, leadership roles/responsibilities, entrepreneurship/business ventures, record keeping, negotiation skills among others will serve as great potential and motivators for broader application and replication in other communities/areas within and beyond the project intervention districts. The savings culture has been nurtured within various project community groups and/or by individuals who will motivate others to venture into such community initiatives on a wider scale. Training programmes related to institution/promotion of cooperatives to enhance aggregation, storage and marketing of produce could also be adopted on a wider scale by like-minded groups/organizations within and beyond project intervention districts. Group dynamics and cohesiveness coupled with proper record keeping and community meetings to enhance feedback/accountability are quite crucial for wider adoption/replication. Finally, promoting and nurturing the agency of women, girls and youth in project activities and equality in the acquisition of benefits are quite critical for triggering wider acceptance and replication of project initiatives towards addressing climate vulnerabilities and building community resilience.

EQ 8.1.b. What have been the key challenges faced in implementing this project?

EQ 8.1.c. Have these challenges been effectively addressed in the project context? If yes, how? If not, then why not?

Finding 49. The late start of the project, the initial unintegrated nature of implementing various project components and the protracted nature of the procurement process were the major challenges. However, to some extent, these addressed within the project's context.

185. The project's late start negatively impacted the timely implementation of planned activities. This was compounded by the abrupt absence of a Project Coordinator. Further, greater emphasis was placed on establishing vegetable gardens and other related crop activities. This happened at the expense of other planned activities, especially under the livestock component. An integrated approach could have been used to implement the planned activities across all project components due to their interlinkages and the need for reinforcement within and among the different components to realize effective impact. Also, the drawn out procurement processes were major constraints. The delayed completion of procurement activities also negatively impacted the rate of activity implementation across components. In addition, delayed report submissions by some of the implementing partners led to even further delays in the approval and disbursement process for new letters of agreement on activity implementation. The transition from the use of letters of agreement to concept notes was also a challenge for the implementing partners as they considered the process very cumbersome and time consuming. Indeed, this trickled down to the delayed implementation of activities.
186. Despite the late start, FAO and the governmental partners endeavoured to initiate the project and ensure effective delivery. The new Project Coordinator made extra efforts with his team to implement most of the pending activities and other project-related engagements. The team, in consultation with the project steering committee, the implementing partners and FAO, received three no-cost extensions to ensure the completion of the pending activities. Efforts were made by the project team, FAO in the Gambia and the FAO Regional Office for Africa through the FLO and the LTO to help expedite the procurement processes. The project team also supported the implementing partners in the development of letters of agreement by providing technical advice and guidelines. Meetings and project site visits were organized by the project team, the project steering committee and the implementing partners to ensure effective oversight, supervision and the provision of timely advice and decisions regarding project implementation challenges, lessons learned and a way forward. An exit strategy was collectively developed with the implementing partners and participating community representatives. This outlined roles and responsibilities for the final handover and to ensure the sustainability of the initiated project interventions.

EQ 8.1.d. Based on the lessons learned and the current context, what recommendations exist in terms of refocusing the project interventions?

EQ 8.1.e. Have the lessons learned been generally utilized in the project context and beyond?

Finding 50. Strategies should be put in place to enhance the effective operationalization of the exit strategy, expedite the implementation of pending activities and strengthen the implementing partners and the communities to take on their designated roles and responsibilities. These efforts are paramount for sustainability.

187. A convergence of the project team, the project steering committee, FAO in the Gambia staff, the implementing partners, the communities, the civil society organizations, other relevant government projects and key stakeholders is necessary to collectively revisit the exit strategy and develop a concrete action plan to facilitate its effective operationalization. The pending and future procurement activities should be expedited to ensure the timely implementation of ongoing, pending and planned activities. Community champions should be identified across the key interventions. They should be capacitated and motivated to disseminate the identified GAPs to their fellow community members in order to scale up

or replicate such adaptation measures. Most of the implementing partners have budgetary constraints and would most likely stop taking care of some project expenses like the payment of allowances to staff from the implementing partners and fuel costs. Most implementing partners would struggle to continue some of the delegated responsibilities without external support. There is a need to further strengthen the institutional and organizational capacities of the implementing partners in order to enhance the final handover of project activities that are relevant to their respective mandates (financial, technical, material). There is a need to organize regular meetings, reviews and reflection sessions, as well as joint supervisory site visits to constructively engage communities on ongoing project activities.

188. Good agricultural practices such as climate-resilient sustainable agriculture and other climate-adaptation measures were fully utilized by project participants and replicated in other non-project intervention communities within and beyond the intervention districts and regions. A culture of savings was also promoted and adopted by both individuals and community groups. The establishment of livestock drinking points and accessories, the re-demarcation and establishment of stock routes, and the institutionalization of local conventions for livestock communities was quite attractive for the Government of the Gambia. There are now plans to expand and replicate these initiatives in other regions and districts through the Department of Livestock Services. The knowledge, experience and skills acquired through the exchange visits and study tours were fully utilized by both the implementing partners and the communities in their various locations.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. *Relevance:* the project design was relevant. It was designed to meet the needs of the target beneficiaries and aligned with the country's context, as well as key national, regional and international policy documents.

189. The project aligned with the following: the Gambian National Development Plan, its climate change policy and strategy, and its forestry policy and strategy; the FAO CPF and development assistance framework; the GEF portfolio and priorities; most of the GEF core indicators; and SDGs 1, 2, 5, 12 and 13. It was relevant to FAO and the country in terms of addressing climate change and variability, improving lives and livelihoods, and enhancing good governance and sound environmental management. The project also addressed the needs and priorities of the target population, especially female vegetable growers and livestock farmers by increasing their nutritional status and earning capacity. It also reduced farmer-herder conflict in the intervention districts.

Conclusion 2. *Effectiveness:* the project made significant progress towards the realization of the planned outputs and outcomes.

190. This was demonstrated under institutional strengthening at the national, regional, district and community level: the dissemination of timely weather and climate information; the promotion of integrated livelihoods and income generation; and the promotion of sustainable production and management practices linked to value-added products and marketing. However, the livestock component lagged behind and needs more focus to accomplish the pending activities before project closure. The establishment of the vegetable gardens significantly contributed to increased income. This brought peace, unity, harmony and improved lives and livelihoods to the respective communities.

Conclusion 3. *Efficiency and implementation:* the protracted nature of the procurement processes negatively impacted the rate of implementation, both in terms of timeliness and budget adequacy.

191. This was highlighted at the level of FAO, the implementing partners and the communities. It was attributed to FAO bureaucracy, but also delayed procurement processes at the level of project management and the implementing partners. Although the intensive scrutiny embedded within the procurement cycle ensured efficiency and quality delivery, FAO and the implementing partners need to create strategies to expedite the process. Budget inadequacy at the time of approval was mainly due to inflation-driven price hikes. This happened frequently and stemmed from highly volatile economic trends in the Gambia and beyond. Certain contracts were delayed due to so much back-and-forth in the procurement process. This then impacted the timeliness of activities.

Conclusion 4. *Sustainability:* the unavailability of markets, warehouses and cold storage facilities for garden produce is a key risk. This impacts the project's economic benefits.

192. Market access, the availability of warehouses as cold storage facilities and the need to complete unfinished structures and facilities were outcries from female vegetable growers across the supported gardens. Indeed, these elements would avoid post-harvest losses.

Conclusion 5. Execution: the project was duly and diligently executed by the FAO project team in collaboration with the implementing partners and the communities. There was effective support and oversight from the FLO, the LTO and the FAO Country Office.

193. The project team, with backstopping from the LTO, the FLO and the FAO Country Office, planned and implemented a significant number of activities. These already yield impact.

Conclusion 6. M&E: the project's M&E plan and system were in place and operational.

194. The Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool was strictly followed and updated accordingly, a baseline study was conducted using the SHARP+ methodology and targets were clearly defined. Success stories, newsletters and documentaries were widely disseminated. A project steering committee, the NTAT and the RTAT were all established for backstopping the PMU in its oversight and coordination role, even though this needs further strengthening through regular meetings, project site visits and necessary feedback.

Conclusion 7. Financial management and co-financing: there was low performance in the co-financing arrangements. A thorough review and engagement during the delayed project start could have avoided this.

195. Some of the prospective co-financers were phased out due to the project's late start. Re-planning is needed to tap into other funding sources or co-financing arrangements.

Conclusion 8. Partnership and stakeholder engagement: apart from the GEF forestry project (GAM 031) and the implementing partners, there were no indications that the project worked in consultation with other projects or institutions. This includes, for example, ROOTS from the Ministry of Agriculture and the LsEbA project from the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources. Such collaboration would have built synergies and complementarities that could have avoided the duplication of efforts and resources.

196. These projects work on various adaptation measures in building resilience to climate change and variability. They should therefore be engaged with to ensure synergy.

Conclusion 9. Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products: a significant number of communications and knowledge management products were generated and disseminated. This aspect raised awareness on the project and the commitment to build resilience against climate change and variability.

197. Documentaries, publications, newsletters and social media posts were disseminated throughout. However, low literacy levels in the target communities meant that some of the communications products could have been translated into local languages for wider learning and sharing.

Conclusion 10. Gender: economic empowerment boosted women's agency at the project intervention sites. Indeed, they took on leadership roles and effectively participated in decision-making processes at the household and community level.

198. Women's income generation capacity increased due to their participation in the vegetable garden, poultry and small ruminant activities. This led to their economic independence and effectively contributed to household expenditures. This also built their resilience and reduced their vulnerability to climate change and variability.

Conclusion 11. Progress towards impact: the project significantly impacted livelihoods, especially at sites with vegetable gardens.

199. Women are the most vulnerable to climate change and variability. Their income stems from vegetable gardens, which allow them to meet their needs along with those of the household and the community. A savings culture was introduced accordingly, which most women practice.

Conclusion 12. *Lessons learned:* effective sensitization and awareness creation on climate change and variability alongside timely and sufficient project support (technical, material, financial) increases the adaptive capacities of farm families.

200. The project participants gained more knowledge on climate change and variability. At the same time, they acquired skills in planning and implementing various adaptation measures towards building resilience.

Conclusion 13. Although the exit strategy was developed and validated with a clear delineation of activities, roles and responsibilities, its implementation cannot be guaranteed after project closure.

201. The exit strategy dialogues must change people's mindset to see on-the-ground projects as government interventions, where the relevant departments and institutions take on lead roles. In effect, the project must be handed over to relevant government departments, counterparts and implementing partners. Here, the need for continuity needs to be fully discussed and agreed upon.

4.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. *Relevance:* the Gambia is highly vulnerable to climate change and variability. The project was indeed relevant, effective and efficient in overall delivery. The changes experienced in the lives of the target population demonstrate this. Indeed, the project triggered progress in the intervention communities. It would be prudent to seek a second project phase or a continuation through a new project. This is due to the magnitude of climate change vulnerability in the country and the fact that this affects other regions. There is also a need to build more resilience in the communities. This request has been repeated by the target beneficiaries across all regions, especially by women who bear the brunt of climate change and variability. It would help to both further consolidate gains made and expand into other deprived regions like West Coast, Lower River, Central River, south and Upper River, south. Further, people with disabilities and their organizations should be involved in the second phase. Gender considerations and vulnerable populations should also be included. FAO should look into this in the short to medium term, before the October 2023 project closure.

Recommendation 2. *Effectiveness:* although the intensive scrutiny embedded within the FAO procurement cycle is to ensure efficiency and quality delivery, this process needs to be reviewed so that it can provide more effective strategies at all levels (FAO headquarters, FAO in the Gambia, project management team, implementing partners) to help expedite the process. In particular, there should be a more direct role on behalf of the implementing partners as procuring units for future projects of a similar nature.

202. FAO bureaucracy related to procurement issues can and should be reduced. Further, the evaluation recommends that there should be opportunities for staff from FAO headquarters, especially procurement staff members, to visit the field so that they can better understand the on-the-ground realities. This would expose them to the challenges, constraints and related impacts of procurement on project activities. Implementation delays due to slow procurement processes typically affect FAO initiatives beyond this project.

203. There is the need to refocus and expedite the implementation of all pending activities, especially for rangeland development. This is to ensure full completion before project closure and includes the following: the completion of water facilities and related accessories for the livestock drinking points; the demarcation of stock routes; the mounting of concrete pillars; and the establishment of the identified deferred grazing areas and the intensive feed gardens. These actions should be initiated and completed by FAO in the short to medium term, before project closure.

Recommendation 3. Efficiency: the supported vegetable gardens performed well. In fact, some had two to three production cycles. This sometimes led to serious marketing constraints and calls for support. The formation and registration of community garden groups into cooperatives is vital. Moreover, supporting them through business plans alongside the planned convergence of producers and vendors enhances the aggregation and sale of garden produce. This is critical for the sustainability of these initiatives. The Agribusiness Services unit under the Department of Agriculture, as the lead agency, should engage with the project management team for support. This action should be implemented in the short term, before project closure.

Recommendation 4. Sustainability: a stakeholder convergence should be organized upon project closure to further reactivate and roll out the exit strategy. This should include an accompanying action plan. It also needs to engage and prepare the respective implementing partners and communities so that they can eventually take on any ongoing or pending project interventions. The project team, FAO, the implementing partners and the communities are key in ensuring the continuity of the initiated interventions. FAO should take on this responsibility before project closure.

Recommendation 5.1. Factors affecting performance (implementation): strategies should be put in place to expedite the procurement processes. This involves the full involvement of and consultation with the implementing partners and the communities. Exposing personnel from FAO headquarters, especially procurement personnel, to the field could also make them interact, understand and appreciate the project interventions and the related procurement challenges. FAO should work on this immediately.

Recommendation 5.2. Factors affecting performance (execution): FAO's project execution and oversight role (FAO Country Office, FLO, LTO, project personnel) should be further strengthened to ensure the effective delivery of any ongoing or pending interventions. At the same time, FAO should ensure a proper and effective handover to the relevant implementing partners and the communities for sustainability (see Recommendations 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5). FAO should execute this as soon as possible, before project closure.

Recommendation 5.3. Factors affecting performance (M&E): there is need for regular and continuous follow up with the implementing partners to ensure timely and quality reporting. The organization of review, reflection and feedback sessions for both the implementing partners and the communities on the status of project interventions, key challenges, lessons learned and a way forward would reinvigorate interest and commitment while fulfilling project and institutional accountability requirements. The project management team should take a lead role in this and implement it immediately.

Recommendation 5.4. Factors affecting performance (financial management and co-financing): there is need for effective follow up by the project implementation team on co-financers that have yet to complete their co-financing promises or agreements. In particular, this involves the government and other projects that are currently in progress. The project management team should follow up on this immediately.

Recommendation 5.5. *Partnership and stakeholder engagement:* there is a need for more engagement and reorientation around the exit strategy. This involves technical, material and financial support for both the implementing partners and the communities to ensure a smooth transition of the interventions after project closure. The project management team should take on this role and implement it immediately.

Recommendation 5.6. *Communications, knowledge management and products:* key knowledge products like documentaries, newsletters and publications should be translated into local languages for wider learning and sharing. A recognition of community champions in building resilience to climate change and variability should be identified, selected, supported and guided to further educate and entice other farmers to follow. This would support wider replication and gains in scaling up that were made through the project interventions. The project management team should take on this role and implement it in the short- to medium-term.

Recommendation 6. *ESS:* there is need for more training, field visits and study tours for the implementing partners and the communities. This should cover relevant areas such as climate-resilient sustainable agriculture, integrated livestock farming, the selection of climate-resilient crop species, GAPs and marketing arrangements. The project management team should work on this in the medium term.

Recommendation 7. *Gender:* continue empowering women and youth to take the lead in the project initiatives and decision-making processes that affect their lives and livelihoods. The involvement of and support for people with disabilities is crucial in recognizing and promoting equal rights while building resilience against the effects of climate change and variability. The project management team should take on this role and implement it in the medium term.

Recommendation 8. *Progress towards impact:* the smooth and timely completion of pending and ongoing project interventions and the development and implementation of concrete action plans for activating the exit strategy would go a long way in ensuring sustainability. This should be taken on by FAO and the project management team in the short term.

Recommendation 9. *Lessons learned:* the project management team needs to flesh out key lessons learned during project execution. It should then compile and use these to further strengthen or devise new strategies towards ensuring effective, timely and informed decision-making either during or after the project's phase out period. This work should be done immediately.

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Appendix 1. People interviewed

Stakeholder/ intervention	Proposed date	Location	Key contact person	Mode of engagement/data collection
National-level consultation from 1 to 14 November 2022				
Ministry of Agriculture, Central Projects Coordination Unit	From 1 to 14 November 2022 (stakeholders will be met with as appointments are confirmed)	Banjul	Bintou Gassama, Deputy Permanent Secretary	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment		Banjul	Pa Modou Manneh	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs		Banjul	Ebrima Darboe	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
NEA		Kanifing	Dawda Badgie The GEF focal point: Njagga Touray	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
FAO		Fajara	Mustapha Ceesay Assistant FAO Representative (Programming)	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
Department of Agriculture		Bakau	Saikou Sanyang	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
Department of Water Resources		Banjul	Peter Gibba	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
NARI		Brikama	Demba Trawalleh	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
Department of Livestock Services		Abuko	Ebou Jobe	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
National Seed Secretariat		Abuko	Morro Manga	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
National Livestock Owners Association		Brikama	Ebrima O. Jallow	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
National Coordinating Organization for Farmers Association in the Gambia		Brikama	Musa Sowe	Face-to-face using KII or SSI
North Bank from 15 to 17 November 2022				
Meeting the RTAT team members, Kerewan Nyakoi	From 15 to 16 November 2022	Kerewan Nyakoi	Regional Agriculture Director, North Bank John Mendy Regional Livestock Director, North Bank Sarjo Camara Regional Forestry Officer, Bakary Jarju Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project Regional Coordinator, North Bank Lamin Daffeh Extension staff: two Crop extension staff:	Face-to-face using KII or SSI

Stakeholder/ intervention	Proposed date	Location	Key contact person	Mode of engagement/data collection
			Omar Sonko Livestock extension staff: Pateh Sowe	
Institutional capacity building, vegetable garden scheme, M&E issues Beekeeping scheme Small ruminants scheme Post-harvest milling machine		Jufureh (Upper Niimi district)	Momodou Janneh (male) Fatou Bah (female) Suntu Jatta (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens, livestock boreholes, stock routes, M&E issues	17 November 2022 (including travel time to the next region)	Samba Chargeh (Jorkadu district)	Samba Jarri Sowe (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Institutional capacity building, vegetable garden scheme, drought-tolerant crop seeds, production and demonstrations, M&E issues		Kerr Selleh (Jokadou district)	Kumba Touray (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens, livestock boreholes, stock routes, M&E issues		Dobo (Central Badibou district)	Amadou Jallow (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Institutional capacity strengthening, vegetable garden scheme, drought- tolerant crop seeds, production and demonstrations, M&E issues		Kunjo (Sabach Sanjal district)	Tumbul Jammeh	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Broiler scheme		Nyang Kunda (Sabach Sanjal district)	Awa Faal (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Central River, north from 18 to 20 November 2022				
Meeting with the RTAT members, Kuntaur	From 18 to 19 November 2022 (stakeholders will be engaged with through face-	Kuntaur	Regional Agriculture Director: Mustapha Bah Regional Livestock Director: Ebou Jobe Regional Forestry Officer: Ebrima Sanneh Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs

Stakeholder/ intervention	Proposed date	Location	Key contact person	Mode of engagement/data collection
	to-face interviews)		Regional Coordinator, Central River, north and Upper River, north: Ousainou Sanyang Extension staff: two Crop extension staff: Musa Kanyi, Wassu Livestock extension staff: Samba Camara, Wassu	
Institutional capacity strengthening, vegetable garden scheme, M&E issues Small ruminants scheme Beekeeping units Broiler scheme Post-harvest milling machines	20 November 2022	Genji Wolof (Lower Saloum district)	Abdou Ceesay (male) Ndey Jobe (female) Cherry Sowe (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Vegetable garden scheme Beekeeping scheme Broiler scheme		Wassu (Niani district) Wassu Fandema Kafo	Sannah Duganda (female) Rokiya Dumbuya (female) Mama Sanneh (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Land rehabilitation for tidal irrigation scheme		Kuntaur Fulla Kunda (Niani)	Fullo Jawneh (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Institutional capacity strengthening, vegetable garden scheme, drought- tolerant crop seeds, production and demonstrations, M&E issues Beekeeping scheme Small ruminants scheme Broiler scheme		Lamin Koto (Sami)	Fanta Comma (female) Saibo Sanyang (male) Mam Tunkara (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens, livestock boreholes, stock routes, M&E issues		Demfai (Sami)	Kekuta Fadia (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Upper River, north from 21 to 23 November 2022				
Meeting with the RTAT members, Basse	From 21 to 22 November 2022	Basse	Regional Agriculture Director, Upper River: Karamo Minteh	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs

Stakeholder/ intervention	Proposed date	Location	Key contact person	Mode of engagement/data collection
			Regional Livestock Director, Upper River: Ebrima Fofana Regional Forestry Officer, Upper River: Yankuba Bajo Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project Regional Coordinator: Ousainou Sanyang Extension staff Crop extension staff: Livestock extension officer: Abdoulie Trawally	
Institutional capacity strengthening, vegetable garden scheme, drought- tolerant crop seeds, production and demonstrations, M&E issues Broiler scheme Beekeeping scheme Small ruminants scheme		Kuwonkuba (Sandu district) Kuwonkuba Yiriwa Kafo	Jalamang Touray (male) Jalamang Touray (male) Nemuna Camara (female) Fenda Sanneh (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Vegetable garden scheme Beekeeping scheme Broiler scheme Small ruminants scheme	23 November 2022	Kerewan Nyakoi (Wulli West)	Jaka Dibbasy (female) Lamin Sidibeh (male) Bunda Jawara (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens, livestock boreholes, stock routes, M&E issues		Sutukonding (Wulli West)	Mawdo Jatta (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories

Note: See also Appendix 6b.

Appendix 2. GEF evaluation criteria rating table

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
A. Relevance		
A1. Overall strategic relevance	S	The project was clearly appropriate. It aligned with all of the relevant policies, the GEF and FAO strategic frameworks and mechanisms, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (1, 2, 5, 12 and 13), and national development plans and priorities in building farmer resilience to climate change through appropriate adaptation measures and practices.
A1.1 Alignment with the GEF and FAO strategic priorities	HS	The project perfectly aligned with both the GEF and FAO country strategic frameworks and objectives.
A1.2 Relevance to national, regional and global priorities and beneficiary needs	HS	The project addressed agriculture and natural resources policies and action plans (forestry and climate change), the Paris Agreement, and the National Adaptation Programme of Action on Climate Change.
A1.3 Complementarity with existing interventions	HS	The project collaborated with similar donor-funded projects, complementing governmental efforts to enhance climate resilience for improved and sustained food production and productivity. The project was linked to a FAO-GEF forestry project, two FAO-European Union projects on agriculture and food fortification, and a United Nations peacebuilding project. Other projects like ROOTS under the Ministry of Agriculture supported community gardens through crop and vegetable seeds and the Gambia Inclusive and Resilient Agricultural Value Chain Development Project supported rice production. The LsEbA project also intervened to establish stock routes and natural resources enterprises.
B. Effectiveness		
B1. Overall assessment of project results	MS	Despite many challenges like COVID-19 and cumbersome procurement processes, the project achieved remarkable success. Overall, it built the capacities of the implementing partner institutions, the civil society organizations and the farmer-based organizations. The establishment of ten vegetable gardens created income generation opportunities for the beneficiary communities and contributed to food and nutrition security. The establishment of the stock routes and the signing of local conventions improved rangeland management and reduced farmer-herder conflict. The provision of animal drinking points (in progress) will boost production and productivity. Other plans like beekeeping, poultry and small ruminants (all in progress) will go a long way in increasing beneficiary income generation capacities.
B1.1 Delivery of project outputs	MS	The project had mixed results on activity implementation. All of the planned vegetable gardens were established with solar-powered reticulation systems for easy access to water. The planned stock routes were established (the erecting of boundary pillars is in progress) and local conventions were signed. Boreholes for all of the planned cattle drinking points were drilled but still need to be fitted with water reticulation systems (elevated water tanks, solar power, drinking troughs). The broilers, beekeeping and small ruminant activities were developed but are not fully operational. The rehabilitation of the Kuntaur Fula Kunda rice fields have yet to

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
		materialize, even though initial surveys and the design of the fields were done.
B1.2 Progress towards outcomes ¹ and project objectives	S	Overall, the project built partner institution and community structure capacity. In addition, it enhanced information sharing on the weather and climate-related issues. It contributed to women's economic empowerment and promoted their agency. Further, the project strengthened unity and social cohesion within partner communities. As an added benefit, it improved access to water across the intervention regions for production, animal watering and domestic purposes.
- Outcome 1.1 Adaptive capacity of institutions strengthened and climate change adaptation priorities mainstreamed into sectoral policies and plans	S	The project conducted relevant, adaptive capacity building initiatives for various stakeholders on key thematic areas to mainstream climate change and gender into policies and to enhance the resilience of the sector against climate change threats. Specifically, it supported the development of the National Early Warning Strategy under the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA). The NEA lab upgrade and staff training positions the agency to address climate change. It, however, needs to be supported in order to enhance full-fledged operations. Institutions like NARI, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock Services and project intervention communities also benefited from capacity building programmes (study tours, exchange visits, trainings) to enhance their institutional and organizational capacities.
Outcome 2.1 Increased knowledge on and understanding of vulnerability and risk assessment tools, agroclimatic monitoring and climate information services for food security by national and local institutions	MS	Under this component, the farming communities were able to access real-time information on weather and climate-related issues to inform their farming calendars. Trainings on vulnerability and risk assessment increased the knowledge of staff and key partners (Planning Services Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture, NDMA, Department of Agriculture, Department of Livestock Services, Department of Water Resources, NARI, Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency) in these vital areas and further support their preparation for climate uncertainties.
Outcome 3.1 Integrated climate resilient strategies for diversified livelihoods strengthened/introduced and sources of income improved for vulnerable households and communities	MS	The project created adaptation strategies and options, including the establishment of community gardens, stock routes, beekeeping, broiler, cockerel and small ruminant activities. Income from the vegetable gardens contributed immensely to women's economic empowerment and addressed household needs (school, health, food, clothing, and miscellaneous expenses). However, the other income generation plans need to mature.
Outcome 3.2 Strengthened climate-resilient livelihoods of target populations by promoting sustainable crop intensification and innovative crop improvement and management practices	MU	In collaboration with NARI, the project provided drought-tolerant crop varieties (cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato, findi, cowpea, rice) for multiplication. The multiplication of these improved varieties has yet to be seen, but it may promote diversification and the intensification of production activities towards building resilience to climate change and variability. In addition, the rehabilitation of the Kuntaur rice has yet to see results. Regardless, this could boost rice production in the targeted cluster communities. This is important since the communities largely rely on this area for their lives and livelihoods.
Outcome 4.1 Improved rangeland management	MU	The project made strides to improve rangeland management for better livestock production and productivity in the intervention

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
and increased access to livelihood assets in order to sustain income sources by livestock-dependent communities		communities. However, progress was limited as only six stock routes were established and nine boreholes were drilled, pending completion of the accessories (elevated water tanks, solar-powered water reticulation system, drinking troughs), intensive feed gardens and deferred grazing areas.
Outcome 5.1 Project implemented with a results-based management framework, and good practices and lessons learned disseminated widely	S	An M&E plan and system were established during the last two years (post MTR) to enhance the tracking of project indicators for timely decision-making and the documentation of achievements. The project could document and disseminate success stories, convey lessons learned, and create factsheets, newsletters, billboards and documentaries. The project steering committee, the National Technical Advisory Team (NTAT) and the Regional Technical Advisory Team (RTAT) were established to backstop monitoring activities. However, only the project steering committee was moderately active in this regard.
- Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/outcomes	MS	Overall, the project built partner institution and community structure capacities. In addition, it enhanced information sharing on the weather and climate-related issues. It contributed to women's economic empowerment and promoted the agency of women. Furthermore, the project intervention strengthened unity and social cohesion within partner communities. As an added benefit, it also improved access to water across the intervention regions for production, animal watering and domestic purposes. The documentation and dissemination of information on project progress, achievements, challenges and lessons learned were enhanced.
B1.3 Likelihood of impact	MS	The project significantly impacted the lives and livelihoods of the beneficiaries of the community gardens by raising their income generation capacities, supporting their ability to address household needs and promoting unity and social cohesion. These aspects built their resilience to climate change and variability. There was an improvement in strengthening institutional capacities at the national and local level. This, in addition to the knowledge, skills and experience gained, also built resilience at the national and local level. Further, significant impact can be gained upon completion of the pending activities under the livestock and crop components.
C. Efficiency		
C1. Efficiency ²	S	The project reached 73 percent disbursement as per the June 2022 Programme Implementation Report (PIR). The establishment of vegetable gardens with solar-powered water reticulation systems reduced drudgery for women. The time gained is used by women in other production and community roles. The dispatch of Songhai graduates, extension staff and Farmer Field School (FFS) members for the vegetable gardens brought extension services to the doorsteps of the communities at minimal cost. The protracted nature of procurement processes impacted the rate of implementation to a great extent in terms of timelines and the inadequacy of budgets. This was due to the high frequency of price changes that stemmed from volatile economic trends. Ensuring synergy between various project components, as observed in the MTR, also contributed to efficiency. In particular, this brought the livestock component on board, which had lagged during the first half of the project. The decision to rehabilitate Kuntaur rice fields (83 ha) instead of

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
		implement the initial plan to develop 40 ha in the Wassu rice fields cut costs, even though this still needs to start effectively.
D. Sustainability of project outcomes		
D1. Overall likelihood of risks to sustainability	ML	The risk to long-term sustainability is very low. The project developed an exit strategy with the participation of the government, the implementing partners, other similar projects and the beneficiaries to create a sustainable continuity of project results. However, the actual transfer of planned activities in the exit strategy to sectoral plans and budgets of the implementing partners is not guaranteed.
D1.1 Financial risks	ML	The commitment of the implementing partners to incorporate activities into their budget lines upon project closure is not guaranteed due to existing budgetary constraints. However, there are opportunities for other current projects to take on such activities with proper negotiation (ROOTS, the LsEbA project, Gambia Inclusive and Resilient Agricultural Value Chain Development Project). In addition, beneficiary communities also set up measures to ensure the availability of funds beyond the project's lifetime (opening of bank accounts, levying of service fees, membership contributions).
D1.2 Sociopolitical risks	L	These risks are very low. In fact, stakeholder expectations have gone up due to the project achievements and the anticipated impacts. The signing of local conventions reduces farmer-herder conflict risk.
D1.3 Institutional and governance risks	ML	The governance structures at the national and community level provide an avenue for organizing and implementing project activities with the required guidance, management and support.
D1.4 Environmental risks	L	An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) was conducted. This guaranteed less risks, if any. In addition, all of the vegetable gardens practice organic farming, which maintains a balanced ecosystem and biodiversity.
D2. Catalysis and replication	L	The project is a catalyst for scale up and replication, especially for the GEF-8 cycle.
E. Factors affecting performance		
E1. Project design and readiness ³	MS	The project followed a participatory design approach with a thorough identification of stakeholders at the national and regional level. Expected roles and responsibilities were defined in the preparatory phase with the priorities and perspectives of local communities and women reflected in the project document (FAO, 2016a). Key staff, including the Project Coordinator, contributed to the project's effectiveness and readiness to kick-start operations. In addition, the project steering committee was established and participated in consultative meetings at decentralized levels to ensure beneficiary acceptance and ownership. The project, however, lacked a theory of change (TOC) at the design stage, which was supposed to provide linkages among the resources, outputs, outcomes/impacts and project goals. Similarly, the project timeframe was considerably short given the number of no-cost extensions required to successfully implement its activities.
E2. Quality of project implementation	MS	The Project Management Unit (PMU) was established and operational. The project's implementing partners were identified and their respective letters of agreement were signed and operational. Routine joint field monitoring visits were conducted with emerging implementation issues discussed for corrective actions by the

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
		management. On activity implementation, efforts were more concentrated on horticulture-related interventions. This led to non-integration and major delays in implementing the livestock component.
E2.1 Quality of project implementation by FAO (Budget Holder, Lead Technical Officer (LTO), Project Task Force (PTF), etc.)	MS	The project's actors fully participated in the project's deliverables by holding periodic ad hoc meetings that provided guidance and direction. There was good engagement and supervision among FAO headquarters, the FAO Regional Office for Africa and the project management team, despite pandemic-related travel restrictions. The LTO had been involved since the start and even contributed to drafting the project document. He was involved in reviewing and clearing all things related to the project (reports, requests, and procurement documents) and was close to the in-country project team. Telephone, email and WhatsApp exchanges allowed him to be kept abreast with the field. Problems and successes could be shared with him as implementation progressed, even though he could not be physically present due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and other duties.
E2.2 Project oversight (project steering committee, project working group, etc.)	S	The project steering committee and the partners actively participated in their respective engagements to provide oversight responsibilities. This contributed immensely to the achievement of results. However, the NTAT and the RTAT were not active.
E3. Quality of project execution For decentralized projects: PMU/Budget Holder For Operational Partners Implementation Modality projects: executing agency	S	A PMU was established and worked closely with the implementing partners on the letters of agreement. Annual work plans and budgets were developed and tracked to easily measure performance. The project underwent two management phases. The first Project Coordinator resigned, and it took almost one year before his replacement was set. This contributed to implementation delays for some of the planned activities, especially under the livestock component. The Finance Officer was in charge during this lapse. The M&E and Procurement Officers also came on board at a later stage. There were serious delays in the procurement processes and, in some cases, the approval process of the letters of agreement. As a result, most activities were implemented late or not at all.
E4. Financial management and co-financing	S	There is a good financial management system in place to track project disbursements and budget variances. In-kind co-financing pledges were also mobilized, but this was rather unsuccessful due to the closure of other projects like the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Project as planned sources of co-financing.
E5. Project partnership and stakeholder engagement	S	The project engaged extensively with all stakeholders. This positively influenced the delivery of project milestones. The communities were fully engaged and demonstrated interest in and ownership of the project activities. However, the project had less engagement with similar projects of this nature, such as ROOTS from the Ministry of Agriculture and the LsEbA project from the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources.
E6. Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products	S	Over the past two years, the project made tremendous achievements in producing newsletters and factsheets that highlight success stories and lessons learned. In addition, a video clip on a community garden irrigation system was featured at the World Water Forum in Dakar. This documentary increased project visibility and brought public attention to its activities.

GEF criteria	Rating	Summary contents
E7. Overall quality of M&E	S	An M&E system was in place with periodic monitoring missions to track the implementation status and to provide recommendations that guide project implementations. Indicator tracking instruments like the GEF tool and the Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool were updated periodically. Monthly reports were also generated. These highlighted actions for management. A baseline study was conducted with identified indicators and set targets.
E7.1 M&E design	MS	The project had a results framework, but its TOC was not well defined during the formulation phase. The incorporation of an evaluation design matrix would have been ideal since the M&E design went beyond the results matrix.
E7.2 Implementation plan (including financial and human resources)	S	Periodic M&E missions were conducted in accordance with the approved project work plan and budget. The PMU also had periodic monitoring missions and regular management meetings. The initial delays in recruiting key project staff had involved human resources challenges that were later addressed.
E8. Overall assessment of factors affecting performance	MS	Overall, numerous factors like COVID-19 and the related procurement bottlenecks affected project performance. Although the vegetable gardens were established, the solar-powered water reticulation systems for animal drinking points, grazing land and the Fula Kunda rice fields as major project activities still need to be completed.
F. Cross-cutting issues		
F1. Gender and other equity dimensions	S	Gender equity considerations were high with over 70 percent of the project beneficiaries being women. Vegetable garden and poultry plan beneficiaries were predominantly women, which further highlights the intervention's gender responsiveness. The project built the agency of women and immensely contributed to their economic empowerment. This built self-confidence among them. In fact, they took on lead decision-making roles both in the gardens and the household.
F2. Human rights issues/Indigenous Peoples	S	The project was invested in supporting community access to food and water as basic human rights. As such, it had no adverse effects on human rights. Human rights issues were well recognized, embraced and nurtured. This allowed for equal participation and the inclusion of both women and men, youth, and other vulnerable people in the communities.
F23. ESS	S	The project conformed to the ESS, as approved in the designed phase. Good agricultural practices (GAP), including climate-resilient sustainable agriculture and organic farming, were practiced in all of the vegetable gardens. This is more environmentally friendly. Access roads to the vegetable gardens were also under construction. When ready, these will also facilitate market access.
Overall project rating	S	

Notes:

¹ Assessment and ratings by individual outcomes may be undertaken if there is added value.

² This includes cost efficiency and timeliness.

³ This refers to factors affecting the project's ability to start as expected, such as the presence of sufficient capacity among executing partners upon project launch.

Appendix 3. Rating scheme

Project results and outcomes

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

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

During project implementation, the results framework of some projects may have been modified. In cases where modifications in the project impact, outcomes and outputs have not scaled down their overall scope, the evaluator should assess outcome achievements based on the revised results framework. In instances where the scope of the project objectives and outcomes has been scaled down, the magnitude of and necessity for downscaling is taken into account. Despite the achievement of results as per the revised results framework, a lower outcome effectiveness rating may be given where appropriate.

Project implementation and execution

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

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	There were no shortcomings and the quality of implementation or execution exceeded expectations.
Satisfactory (S)	There were no or minor shortcomings and the quality of implementation or execution met expectations.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	There were some shortcomings and the quality of implementation or execution more or less met expectations.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	There were significant shortcomings and the quality of implementation or execution was somewhat lower than expected.
Unsatisfactory (U)	There were major shortcomings and the quality of implementation or execution was substantially lower than expected.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	There were severe shortcomings in the quality of implementation or execution.
Unable to Assess (UA)	The available information does not allow for an assessment of the quality of implementation or execution.

Monitoring and evaluation

Quality of project M&E will be assessed in terms of:

- i. design
- ii. implementation

Sustainability

Sustainability will be assessed by taking into account the risks related to the financial, sociopolitical, institutional and environmental sustainability of the project outcomes. The evaluator may also take other risks into account that may affect sustainability. The overall sustainability will be assessed using a four-point scale:

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

Appendix 4. GEF co-financing table

Sources of co-financing	Name of co-financer	Type of co-financing	Amount confirmed at CEO endorsement/ approval USD	Actual amount materialized by project closure, December 2022	Expected total disbursement by project closure, USD
FAO/ Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (food and agriculture sector development project-technical assistance)	Global Agriculture and Food Security Program	In-kind	1 400 000	None due to land development delays and project phase out	1 400 000
Ministry of Agriculture/Food and Agriculture Sector Development Project	Global Agriculture and Food Security Program	In-kind	14 880 000	None due to land development delays and project phase out	14 880 000
Ministry of Agriculture/West Africa Agriculture Productivity Programme	World Bank	In-kind	12 000 000	None due to land development delays and project phase out	12 000 000
Ministry of Agriculture/H9200	African Development Bank	In-kind	8 550 000	None due to land development delays and project phase out	8 550 000
Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security/Nutrition to Mitigate Migration Flows	European Union	In-kind	0	624 028.88	1 000 000
Improving Food Security and Nutrition in the Gambia through Food Fortification	European Union	In-kind	0	190 393.28	190 393.28
Ministry of Agriculture	Government of the Gambia	In-kind	0	1 000 000	1 250 000
		TOTAL	36 830 000	1 814 422.16	39 270 393

Appendix 5. Results matrix

The criteria are rated on a six-point scale as follows: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); and Highly Unsatisfactory (HU).

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
Component 1. Strengthening of institutional and technical capacity for adaptation to climate change in the agriculture sector							
Outcome 1.1 Adaptive capacity of institutions strengthened and climate change adaptation priorities mainstreamed into sectoral policies and plans	Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool Indicator 2.2.1: number and type of targeted institutions with increased adaptive capacity to minimize exposure to climate variability NEA laboratory services strengthened to support project implementation Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool Indicator 1.1.1: Adaptation actions implemented in national/subregional development frameworks (number and type)	The capacity of the inadequate agencies and local stakeholders is inadequate to respond to the impacts of climate change and variability in the agriculture sector There is an NEA laboratory, but it focuses only on pesticide residue and chemicals Climate change mainstreaming in the agriculture sector lacks technical support and is not systematically done	Five Ministry of Agriculture, 40 Department of Agriculture, 35 Department of Livestock Services, 20 NARI, 16 Food Technology Services, 150 regional staff (in three regions) and 150 entrepreneurs from ten districts increased capacity on climate change adaptation and are capable of better responding to the impacts of climate change The existing laboratory upgraded with new instruments and at least six staff trained on operation and maintenance, and are capable of monitoring the impacts of adaptation interventions on natural resources Climate change priorities are integrated into four national policies/strategies/plans and technical support provided to facilitate National Adaptation Plan (NAP) processes in the agriculture sector through systematic	420 (Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture, NARI, Department of Livestock Services, Food Technology Services) and 340 farmers trained on entrepreneurship on climate adaptation in agriculture and natural resources to better respond to the impacts of climate change 30 farmers (18 females and 12 males) trained on good agroecology practices for environmental protection, social safety nets and biodiversity 22 extension workers (19 males and three females) trained (training of trainers) on post-harvest processing (19 males and three females) Conducted step-down training for farmers (331 females and 44 males) on food processing, handling,	S	S	The project conducted relevant adaptive capacity building for the various stakeholders on key thematic areas to mainstream climate change and gender into policies and enhance the resilience of the sector against climate change adaptation.

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
			<p>consultations at all levels, and 30 Ministry of Agriculture staff trained on mainstreaming where they are aware about the importance of integrating adaptation priorities into policies/plans/strategies</p>	<p>preservation and management</p> <p>Ten communities trained on cooperative management and group dynamics (521 females and 234 males)</p> <p>The NEA lab rehabilitated, equipment installed and eight national staff trained on operation and maintenance, and are capable of monitoring the impacts of adaptation interventions on natural resources</p> <p>155 (129 males and 26 females) participated in national and regional consultation on the mainstreaming of NAP process into national policies as well as addressing gender inequalities in agriculture and natural resources management</p> <p>A National Early Warning Strategy developed under the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA)</p> <p>Final agriculture and natural resources policy document supported by</p>			

Terminal evaluation of the project "Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia"

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				another project (Integrating Agriculture to Climate Change) to be validated and approved National Early Warning Strategy (2021–2026) developed to enhance the dissemination of relevant risk information for timely decision-making			

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
Output 1.1.1 Technical capacity of institutions at all levels (national, regional, district, local) focusing on adaptation in the agriculture sector strengthened	Number of national/regional/local training programmes organized and sustained within the Ministry of Agriculture Number of national/ regional/ local staff trained and support climate change adaptation work Number of entrepreneurship trainings organized to strengthen agribusiness and promote livelihood diversification and income generation activities	Number of systematic training programmes conducted for the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Livestock Services, NARI and other stakeholders No climate change adaptation-related training programmes integrated into the regular activities of the Ministry of Agriculture	Five Ministry of Agriculture, 40 Department of Agriculture, 35 Department of Livestock Services, 20 NARI, 16 Food Technology Services, 150 regional staff (in three regions) and 150 entrepreneurs from ten districts have increased capacity on climate change adaptation and are capable of better responding to the impacts of climate change	420 (Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture, NARI, Department of Livestock Services, Food Technology Services) and 340 farmers trained on entrepreneurship on climate adaptation in agriculture and natural resources to better respond to the impacts of climate change 30 farmers (18 females and 12 males) trained on good agroecology practices for environmental protection, social safety nets and biodiversity 22 extension workers (19 males and three females) trained (training of trainers) on post-harvest processing (19 males and three females) Conducted step-down training for farmers (331 females and 44 males) on food processing, handling, preservation and management Ten communities trained on cooperative management and group	HS	HS	The gains made under this output were tremendous and reached the targets.

Terminal evaluation of the project "Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia"

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				dynamics (521 females and 234 males)			
Output 1.1.2 Quality control for the NEA laboratory strengthened to monitor and analyse the impacts of adaptation practices on natural resources and the environment	An upgraded laboratory with new and relevant instruments available Number of staff trained on operation and the maintenance and monitoring of adaptation practices	There is a laboratory, but it is not geared towards monitoring the impacts of adaptation practices in the agriculture sector	The existing laboratory upgraded with new instruments and at least six staff trained on operation and maintenance, and are capable of monitoring the impacts of adaptation interventions on natural resources	The NEA lab rehabilitated, equipment installed and eight national staff trained on operation and maintenance, and are capable of monitoring the impacts of adaptation interventions on natural resources	S	S	Major achievements include strengthening of the NEA with state-of-the-art technologies and the training of technical staff on basis operations. The NEA is expected to conduct a study on the impact of adaptation interventions on natural resources.

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
Output 1.1.3 NAPs in the agriculture sector facilitated and climate change concerns mainstreamed into national agriculture policies, strategies and programmes	Number of consultations and training organized for the NAP processes and number of agriculture and food security policies mainstreamed with climate change concerns	The agriculture sector is prominent in the current NAP processes but need additional technical support	At least four updated policies/plans available with climate change concerns integrated 30 Ministry of Agriculture staff trained on mainstreaming and a NAP consists of agriculture and food security-related priorities	Conducted five regional consultations and a consolidation workshop on NAPs to mainstream climate change adaptation priorities into national policies, plans and programmes attended by 155 participants (129 males and 26 females) Conducted national consultations and a consolidation workshop on NAPs attended by 45 participants (30 males and 15 females) About 84 Ministry of Agriculture and partners in the agriculture and natural resources sector trained on mainstreaming adaptation priorities in agriculture and natural resources Another FAO project (Integrating Agriculture to Climate Change) completed the merging of policies through the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources into one agriculture and natural resources policy with climate change	MS	MS	The project worked extensively on climate change adaptation. The updating of four policies/plans were not carried out, but another FAO project supported the merging of the existing agriculture and natural resources policy documents of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources into one agriculture and natural resources policy on climate change.

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				mainstreaming issues incorporated, pending approval 70 staff from NARI, the National Seed Secretariat, the Department of Agriculture extension workers and farmer representatives capacitated on research techniques with a special emphasis on climate change effects on agriculture, adaptation and mitigation strategies 30 farmers (18 females and 12 males) trained on good agroecology practices for environmental protection, social safety nets and biodiversity			
Component 2. The assessment of vulnerabilities, risks and the dissemination of timely risk information to users at all levels							
Outcome 2.1 Increased knowledge on and understanding of vulnerability and risk assessment tools, agroclimatic monitoring and climate information services for food security by national and local institutions	Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool Indicator 2.1.2.1: type and scope of monitoring systems in place Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool Indicator 2.1.1: relevant risk information	Multidisciplinary technical groups for agrometeorology and food security early warning available but very weak There is no systematic risk and vulnerability assessment conducted for third national communication	Improved data, tools and methods such as climate, biophysical and socioeconomic variables and analysis for vulnerability and risk assessments and food security early warning systems in place, and at least five staff members from the Department of Water Resources trained to monitor and analyse the risks Multidisciplinary technical group strengthened and	Vulnerability and risk assessment conducted to increase the knowledge on and understanding of vulnerability and risk assessment tools for agroclimatic monitoring 18 staff (Planning Services Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Disaster Management Agency, Department of Agriculture, Department of Livestock Services,	MS	MS	Work under this component has been very slow on delivery and requires a lot of attention. This component is crucial in providing real-time information on climate changes to enhance institution and

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
	disseminated to stakeholders	There is no interagency cooperation in the delivery of climate services for the benefit of decision makers at all levels	disseminating relevant risk information to the target groups (3 000 households in ten districts)	<p>Department of Water Resources, NARI, Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency) trained on a Geographic Information System and drone and database management for risk assessment to disseminate relevant vulnerability information</p> <p>Strengthened the 12 staff members from the Department of Water Resources (12 males and four females) through trainings on the interpretation of weather and climate information for the dissemination of relevant climate information to stakeholders and target groups of over 3 000 householders</p> <p>National Early Warning Strategy (2021–2026) developed to enhance the dissemination of relevant risk information for timely decision-making</p> <p>Department of Water Resources distributed seven dekad bulletins on climate-related early warning information to over 3 000 farmers</p>			farmer preparedness for food production.

Terminal evaluation of the project "Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change in the Gambia"

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				<p>National Framework for Climate Services strengthened through a process of establishing an agriculture and natural resources climate services framework in progress</p> <p>Weather and climate information disseminated through radio talks and stakeholder sensitization on this year's rainy season to enhance food security</p> <p>Existing national user interfaces strengthened and trainings/sensitization to continue to enhance weather and climate information dissemination</p>			
Output 2.1.1 Improved database, tools and methods for vulnerability and risk assessment, agroclimatic monitoring for food security developed at the national and local level and staff trained	<p>New data sets collated from different ministries and departments, and number of risk and vulnerability spatial products</p> <p>New/updated and improved crop monitoring and early warning for food security available</p>	<p>No updated vulnerability and risk assessments done after second national communication</p> <p>An agrometeorology early warning product is available but crop monitoring and region-specific information is not available</p>	<p>One comprehensive risk and vulnerability atlas available for the whole country</p> <p>An updated agrometeorology bulletin and food security early warning information regularly sent from the Department of Water Resources in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture</p>	<p>The Department of Water Resources distributed seven dekad bulletins on climate-related early warning information to over 3 000 farmers</p> <p>A vulnerability and risk assessment was conducted to increase the knowledge on and understanding of vulnerability and risk assessment tools for agroclimatic monitoring</p> <p>18 staff (Planning Services Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture, NDMA,</p>	MS	MS	Great achievements are reported in terms of training and the provision of bulletins on early warning information and improved crop monitoring. The procurement of the agrometeorology tools is pending for trainings on

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				<p>Department of Agriculture, Department of Livestock Services, Department of Water Resources, NARI, Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency) trained on a Geographic Information System and drone and database management for risk assessment to disseminate relevant vulnerability information</p> <p>Strengthened 12 staff members from the Department of Water Resources (12 males and four females) through trainings on the interpretation of weather and climate information for the dissemination of relevant climate information to stakeholders and target groups of over 3 000 householders</p>			vulnerability and risk assessment.
Output 2.1.2 National Framework for Climate Services supported and weather and climate forecasting customized for	<p>A national framework for climate services established and running</p> <p>Improved weather and climate information products</p>	No national platform for climate services and user interface platforms available at the national level Weather and climate information is provided to four	A functioning national platform for climate services Customized weather and climate information products disseminated to three regions, and at least 3 000 households use weather and	<p>Conducted three trainings of listening groups</p> <p>Identified three hubs (one in each intervention region)</p> <p>A National Early Warning Strategy developed</p> <p>Training on the interpretation of weather</p>	MS	MS	There is a national platform for the dissemination of weather and climate information systems. However, expected deliverable which

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
agriculture sector and capacity enhanced	disseminated to at least three regions to help decision-making at the local level	pilot sites through the United Nations Environment Programme/LDCF project, but no information is communicated to the selected three regions in the new LDCF project	climate information for decision-making	and climate information conducted for 12 officials (8 males and 4 females) from the Department of Water Resources			is strengthening of the national and local platforms for climate information dissemination remains pending.
Component 3. Promoting integrated livelihood and income generation, sustainable production and management practices in agriculture that is linked to value-added activities and marketing							
Outcome 3.1 Integrated climate resilient strategies for diversified livelihoods strengthened/ introduced and sources of income improved for vulnerable households and communities	Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool Indicator 1.3.1: households and communities have more secure access to livelihood assets (Score): disaggregated by gender	There are community gardens being implemented through Millennium Development Goal 1C and the Songhai model, but they are constrained by some practical issues	Secure access (Score 4) to livelihood assets by 2 500 farm households through community gardens, 250 households with knowledge on value addition, 50 households with honey production and 30 poultry producer associations, of which, 70 percent are women beneficiaries	Ten community gardens established benefitting 1 616 households (1 337 females and 277 males) directly with the construction of the last milestone (multipurpose houses) is ongoing Six different vegetable seeds were provided and the first production cycle was done in some of the gardens as an improved source of income 84 775 birds vaccinated against Newcastle disease co-funded by the Agriculture for Economic Growth Project (GCP/GAM/040/EC), benefitting 6 445 farmers (3 520 females and 2 927	S	S	Community gardens are fully established. Diversified livelihoods that include beekeeping and broiler and cockerel schemes were also established for improved income.

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				<p>males) to enhance diversified livelihoods</p> <p>Rehabilitated the poultry house of the Department of Livestock to raise 5 000 cockerels for cross-breeding with local breeds to enhance production</p> <p>Trained over 100 farmers (60 females and 40 males) on the latest techniques in beekeeping/honey production, value-added activities and marketing to improve income sources for vulnerable households and communities</p> <p>443 farmers and extension workers trained on post-harvest handling, processing, and the preservation of fruits and vegetables, and the scaling up of good agricultural practices (GAP) for improved production, diversification and value addition</p> <p>130 farmers and extension workers trained on entrepreneurship to enhance their managerial and business management skills for improved livelihoods</p>			

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Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				<p>25 (21 males and four females) Gambia Indigenous Livestock Multipliers' Association Executive Members trained on animal health and production to boost large ruminant production and productivity</p> <p>Study tour to Njoben (Millennium Development Goal 1C) for 210 farmers conducted to strengthen their knowledge on gardening for improved production and productivity</p>			
Output 3.1.1 Location-specific livelihood diversification and income generation models improved and implemented	<p>Number of community gardens (crops) established</p> <p>Number and type of infrastructure established in community gardens</p> <p>Number and type of institutional support provided at the local level</p> <p>Number and type of activities relevant to agribusiness and value-added</p>	<p>There are a number of community gardens established under Millennium Development Goal 1C and the Songhai model projects, but there are practical issues and weaknesses that limit the success of the models</p> <p>The models only focus on vegetable production, which is very small and the benefit received by the community is not making much of</p>	<p>Secure access (Score 4) to livelihood assets by 2 500 farm households through community gardens, 250 households with knowledge on value addition, 50 households with honey production and 30 poultry producer associations, of which, 70 percent are women beneficiaries</p> <p>The Department of Water Resources and the Ministry of Agriculture work closely to communicate weather and climate information products in three selected sites,</p>	<p>Ten community gardens established benefitting 1 616 households (1 337 females and 277 males) directly with the construction of the last milestone (multipurpose houses) is ongoing</p> <p>443 farmers and extension workers trained on post-harvest handling, processing and the preservation of fruits and vegetables and the scaling up of GAPs for improved production, diversification and value addition for six different vegetable seeds were provided and the first</p>	S	S	<p>The achievements are satisfactory with the establishment of the community gardens. Beneficiary farmers are now engaged in production and apply the GAPs from their trainings. In addition, the implementation of other livelihood schemes (broiler, cockerel, beekeeping, etc.)</p>

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
	<p>activities conducted</p> <p>Number of household-level income generation activities prioritized and implemented</p> <p>Number and types of support provided to enhance poultry and small ruminants production at the community level</p>	<p>a difference to their livelihood and income generation opportunities</p>	<p>reaching at least 3 000 households</p>	<p>production cycle was done in some of the gardens as an improved source of income</p> <p>Trained over 100 farmers (60 females and 40 males) on the latest techniques in beekeeping/honey production, value-added activities and marketing to improve income sources for vulnerable households and communities</p> <p>130 farmers and extension workers trained on entrepreneurship to enhance their managerial and business management skills for improved livelihoods</p> <p>25 (21 males and four females and) Gambia Indigenous Livestock Multipliers' Association Executive Members trained on animal health and production to boost large ruminant production and productivity</p> <p>84 775 birds vaccinated against Newcastle disease co-funded by the Agriculture for Economic Growth Project (GCP/GAM/040/EC), benefitting 6 445 farmers</p>			<p>is expected to improve their incomes.</p>

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				(3 520 females and 2 927 males) to enhance diversified livelihoods 5 500 cockerels reared at the rehabilitated Abuko poultry house of the Department of Livestock Services to enhance cross-breeding with local breeds for increased production Distributed 4 000 cockerels to 2 000 households as livelihood diversification for increased income Established ten apiaries, each receiving 15 beehives and associated equipment and accessories Study tour to Njoben (Millennium Development Goal 1C) for 210 farmers conducted to strengthen their knowledge on gardening for improved production and productivity			
Outcome 3.2 Strengthened climate-resilient livelihoods of target populations by promoting sustainable crop intensification and innovative crop	Number of climate-resilient practices introduced and number of households benefitted Number of field demonstrations	The research station trials focus only on the crop improvement of major cereals, and focus is not given to drought-tolerant traditional crop species that have	All 20 communities are closely engaged in field demonstrations and have access to the drought-tolerant crop varieties of findi, cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato and dual-purpose cowpea	22 power tillers provided to the intervention communities to mechanize land preparation in the production of climate-resilient crops Three technical study tours by NARI conducted to strengthen their research	MS	MS	The project supported NARI on climate-smart and drought-tolerant crop trials and community interventions with improved varieties of cassava,

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
improvement and management practices	organized and community participation ensured	more potential in terms of withstanding moisture stress		<p>knowledge in promoting the adoption of high yielding drought-tolerant crops to build resilience against climate change</p> <p>Seven NARI scientists visited (National Institute of Agronomy Study and Research) and its satellite stations in Burkina Faso</p> <p>Six NARI scientists visited the Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research and its satellite stations in Senegal</p> <p>Four NARI scientists, one National Seed Secretariat staff member, one Ministry of Agriculture staff member and the Project Coordinator visited the Crop Research Institute and the Soil Research Institute (Ghana)</p> <p>160 cassava, 80 orange-fleshed sweet potatoes and 25 on-farm field demonstrations, where 1 616 (1 339 females and 277 males) benefitted from 9 217 cassava cuttings and 6 090 sweet potato vines for the multiplication of the drought-tolerant crop varieties supplied by NARI</p>			<p>orange-fleshed sweet potato, findi, cowpea and rice for multiplication and production. Institutional and beneficiary capacities were strengthened on GAPs and food processing. In addition, multipurpose findi and cassava processing machines were provided to the intervention communities. However, limited progress has been made on rice field rehabilitation for tidal irrigation and, with the steps taken so far, this is expected to be complete.</p>

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Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				<p>NARI conducted two trials on findi at the Sapu and Njau farming centres and harvested 95 kg; 90 kg were distributed to the communities during the course of project live cycle for multiplication</p> <p>NARI produced 2 t of early maturing and certified rice varieties for multiplication that are drought- and salt-tolerant (1.8 t) for sustainable crop intensification and resilience building</p> <p>1 616 (1 339 females and 277 males) farmers and NARI (implementing partners) benefited from 110 bags of compound fertilizers and urea, and 70 sets of equipment and tools to intensify the production of drought-tolerant crops</p> <p>Communities supported with ten findi and ten cassava milling machines to enhance food processing and value addition</p>			
Output 3.2.1 Drought-tolerant crop seeds	Number of field demonstrations organized to	Field demonstrations	Drought-tolerant crop varieties of findi, cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato	Three technical study tours by NARI conducted to strengthen their research	S	S	The project reached the targets. The NARI

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
<p>produced and demonstrated at field level with strengthened value-added activities and marketing</p>	<p>promote drought-tolerant crop species</p> <p>Number of certified seed production sites established and number of farmers involved in seed/planting material production</p> <p>Number of training events organized to promote value-added activities and the marketing of findi, cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato and dual-purpose cowpea</p> <p>Number of NARI staff trained/undertook visits to international research centres</p> <p>Number and type of processing equipment supplied to farmers and</p>	<p>focus on varieties for higher yield</p> <p>No specific field demonstrations organized to focus on climate change adaptation</p> <p>Traditional crops such as findi,, drought-tolerant cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato and dual-purpose cowpea side-lined due to new yield enhancement-oriented research programmes by NARI</p> <p>Exchange visits by NARI scientists focused on conferences and workshops and were not specifically focused on the transfer of technology from the research centres</p>	<p>and dual-purpose cowpea introduced in all ten districts, directly benefitting 1 500 households (200 households benefit from findi, 300 households benefit from orange-fleshed sweet potato and 500 households benefit from cassava)</p>	<p>knowledge in promoting the adoption of high yielding drought-tolerant crops to build resilience against climate change</p> <p>Seven NARI scientists visited (National Institute of Agronomy Study and Research) and its satellite stations in Burkina Faso</p> <p>Six NARI scientists visited the Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research and its satellite stations in Senegal</p> <p>Four NARI scientists, one National Seed Secretariat staff, one Ministry of Agriculture staff member and the Project Coordinator visited the Crop Research Institute and the Soil Research Institute (Ghana) 160 cassava, 80 orange-fleshed sweet potatoes and 25 on-farm field demonstrations, where 1 616 (1 339 females and 277 males) benefitted from 9 217 cassava cuttings and 6 090 sweet potato vines for the multiplication of drought-tolerant crop varieties supplied by NARI</p>			<p>has researched and produced improved climate-smart and drought-tolerant crops to build the resilience of farmers against climate change.</p>

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
	number of farmer groups benefitted			<p>NARI conducted two trials on findi at the Sapu and Njau farming centres and harvested 95 kg; 90 kg were distributed to the communities during the course of the project's live cycle for multiplication</p> <p>NARI produced 2 t of early maturing and certified rice varieties for multiplication that are drought- and salt-tolerant (1.8 t) for sustainable crop intensification and resilience building</p> <p>1 616 (1 339 females and 277 males) farmers and NARI (implementing partners) benefited from 110 bags of compound fertilizers and urea, and 70 sets of equipment and tools to intensify the production of drought-tolerant crops</p> <p>22 power tillers provided to the intervention communities to mechanize land preparation in the production of climate-resilient crops</p> <p>Communities supported with ten findi and ten cassava milling machines to enhance food</p>			

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				processing and value addition			
Output 3.2.2 Additional area brought under cropping by developing tidal irrigation and ensuring value-added activities and market linkages	Number of hectares brought under cropping by developing tidal irrigation (Central River, north) Number of farmers/households benefitted from the investment Number and type of marketing linkages established to promote post-harvest processing and marketing	There is a limited area under rice cultivation and some of them have already been affected by salinity There is a sustainable model to link rice production, processing and marketing	At least 40 ha of land brought under tidal irrigation, benefiting at least 200 farmers At least one producer-buyer agreement completed Revised target: 83 ha of rice fields rehabilitated for rice production	Feasibility study on potential tidal irrigation scheme conducted at Central River, north and south by the Soil and Water Management Unit Design for the rehabilitation of the Kuntaur Fullakunda tidal irrigation scheme in Central River, north for the 83 ha	MU	MU	The implementation of this milestone faced numerous challenges and, until recently, the design and bill of quantities for the rehabilitation of the 83 ha of rice field has been submitted. The project should also train 200 farmers on rice production.
Component 4. Enhancing rangeland resilience by implementing improved management practices							
Outcome 4.1. Improved rangeland management and increased access to livelihood assets in order to sustain income sources by livestock-dependent communities	Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool Indicator 1.2.1.3: climate-resilient agricultural (livestock) practices introduced to promote food security (type and level)	The rangelands are degraded and overgrazed due to the lack of proper management alternatives There are no cattle tracks and a lack of local conventions/regulations with regard to grazing, which affects rangeland productivity	Ten deferred grazing areas established and reseeded with multipurpose grass/legume species, ten intensive feed gardens established in each district, six livestock water points established and the demarcation of cattle tracks in place, benefiting 1 000 households	Study tours for 29 farmers and stakeholders to Maka Kolibantang in Senegal to gain more exposure in pastoral infrastructure and rangeland management, especially on livestock watering facilities Ten deferred grazing areas identified for improved rangeland productivity Six out of ten stock routes/cattle tracks established with erected	MS	MS	Progress is limited as major accomplishments are the demarcation of only six stock routes and the drilling of nine boreholes, pending the deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens. With procurement

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
				<p>poles and construction work on the other four sites are ongoing</p> <p>Nine out of ten boreholes</p> <p>Ten local conventions signed by the local government authorities</p> <p>Ten intensive feed gardens identified and procurement processes in progress</p> <p>Farmers (crop/livestock) in ten communities sensitized on conflict management and land tenure systems for increased food security</p> <p>The National Livestock Owners Association trained 25 livestock farmers (23 males and two females) on livestock feed conservation and preservation to increase their resilience against annual feed shortage</p>			processes for the solar-powered systems and drinking troughs at an advanced stage, the project will likely complete the remaining deliverables.
Output 4.1.1. Rangeland resilience enhanced by promoting differed grazing areas and reseeded of multi-purpose grass and legume species	Number of communities benefitting from the establishment of deferred grazing areas Number of rangeland management communities functioning	There are very few successful models of deferred grazing areas	Ten deferred grazing areas established and reseeded with multipurpose grass/legume species, ten intensive feed gardens established (one in each district)	<p>Ten deferred grazing areas identified for improved rangeland productivity</p> <p>25 livestock farmers (23 males and two females) trained on livestock feed conservation and preservation</p> <p>The National Livestock Owners Association and</p>	MU	MU	Site identification was only conducted for deferred grazing areas and intensive feed gardens. Trainings were also conducted. As the process is ongoing, the

Appendix 5. Results matrix

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
	effectively and efficiently using the resources Number of intensive feed gardens developed and operational with community participation			the Department of Livestock Services sensitized farmers (crop/livestock) through dramas and play on conflict management and land tenure systems for increased food security			project is expected to achieve the milestones before project closure in June 2023.
Output 4.1.2. Provision of livestock water points and the improved demarcation of cattle tracks	Number of surface watering points created and number of livestock herders benefitted Area covered under demarcation and marking of cattle tracks to increase cattle access	There are a few developed borehole water points, but these do not focus on less expensive water harvesting surface ponds to provide water for livestock during the rainy season Very limited sites with the demarcation and marking of cattle tracks in Lower River, north and Upper River, north	Six livestock water points established and the demarcation of cattle tracks in place in ten sites, benefiting 1 000 households	Six out of ten stock routes/cattle tracks established with erected poles and construction work on the other four sites are ongoing Nine out of ten boreholes drilled Ten local conventions signed by local government authorities	MS	MS	The establishment of the stock routes are nearing completion, and boreholes were drilled for the livestock drinking points. The procurement processes for the solar-powered systems are at an advanced stage.
Component 5. M&E and knowledge management							
Outcome 5.1. Project implemented with a results-based management framework, and	M&E system developed and implemented effectively	Baseline projects and programmes were established, but these projects and programmes lack a climate	Very well-structured baselines and the evaluation at project closure against the established baselines	M&E system developed and is being implemented Baseline of the project was conducted using SHARP+ and targets are clearly defined	S	S	Over the past two years, project monitoring improved markedly and an M&E system was

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Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline level	End-of-project target	End-of-project achievement	Progress rating [colour code]	Achievement rating	Comments on rating
good practices and lessons learned disseminated widely		change adaptation perspective		<p>The Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool is followed and updated accordingly</p> <p>Good practices, success stories and factsheets disseminated as documented under the knowledge management section</p> <p>Monitoring missions to assess the implementation status of project deliverables</p> <p>Provision of factsheets</p>			put in place to monitor, track and provide recommendations to management on actions for the timely completion of project activities. The documentation of success stories, lessons learned and the production of factsheets and newsletters were done.
Output: 5.1.1. M&E system designed and implemented at all levels, and project-related good practices and lessons learned documented and disseminated	Agreed M&E plan at the start of the project Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool available and followed during the monitoring targets, and baselines clearly defined Number and typology of good practices integrated and disseminated for wider adoption and replication	There is no comprehensive document elaborating good practices for adapting agriculture to climate change	A well-structured M&E system in place and implemented as per the M&E plan At least 15 good practices consolidated, and a cost-benefit analysis conducted and shared widely for replication/scaling up	<p>Project baseline assessment using SHARP+ conducted; M&E frameworks including a monitoring plan and the Adaptation Monitoring and Assessment Tool developed and used</p> <p>Project factsheets, newsletters and other visibility articles produced</p> <p>Good practices, success stories, factsheets, newsletters disseminated, as documented under the knowledge management section</p>	S	S	There is an M&E system in place and project monitoring is routinely done. A communications strategy was developed and has enhanced knowledge management for sharing GAPs and lessons learned through different media platforms

Appendix 6a. Evaluation matrix

Evaluation questions	Subquestions/indicators	Comments	Methods/informants
Relevance			
Project design approach			
EQ 1.1: Were the project outcomes congruent with the GEF focal areas/operational programme strategies, country priorities and the FAO CPF?	EQ 1.1.a: Was the project design appropriate for delivering the expected outcomes? Were the project's strategy and planned actions relevant and adequate to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and all stakeholders involved? EQ 1.1.b: How aligned is the project with the FAO CPF and the Gambian National Development Plan, its forestry policy and strategy, its climate change policy and strategy, and the SDGs?	The Ministry of Agriculture, as the lead national implementing partner, and FAO, as the Budget Holder, will be the first contact point. In addition, the implementing partners will be interviewed, along with the project steering committee. Relevant literature, including project appraisal and other related documents will be reviewed.	Desk reviews, stakeholder consultations and direct individual questionnaire targeting: FAO Project Management Unit (PMU); Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture; steering committee members
	1.1.c Has there been any change in the relevance of the project since its design/since the MTR, such as new national policies, plans or programmes that affect the relevance of the project's objectives and goals? 1.1.d If you could change anything about the design, what would you change?	Existing project-related policies, particularly those formulated during project implementation, will be reviewed.	Desk reviews, stakeholder consultation and direct individual questionnaire targeting: FAO/PMU; Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture; steering committee members
EQ 1.2: To what extent were the project formulation processes participatory?	1.2.a Was the project design approach participatory? How were the intervention areas selected, and how were the stakeholders and beneficiaries identified?	There will be a review of the project appraisal document and consultation of stakeholders that participated in the project design.	Desk review, stakeholder consultation and direct individual questionnaire targeting: FAO/PMU Coordinator; Director General of Agriculture; Director General of Livestock Services; project beneficiaries
Effectiveness			
Results – outcome level			
EQ 2.1: To what extent have the project objectives been achieved, and were there any unintended results? What results, intended and	EQ 2.1.a: To what extent have the institutions and regulatory frameworks been revised, and how do these contribute to the overall project objectives?	A review of the existing policy documents and regulatory frameworks, particularly those targeted by the project.	Desk reviews and stakeholder consultation targeting: FAO/PMU Coordinator; Director General of Agriculture; Director General of Livestock Services; implementing partners; project beneficiaries

Evaluation questions	Subquestions/indicators	Comments	Methods/informants
unintended, has the project achieved across its components?	EQ 2.1.b: To what extent have the vulnerability assessment and monitoring programmes been established?	This assesses the understanding and availability of vulnerability and risk assessment tools, agroclimatic monitoring and climate information services for food security by national and local institutions.	Desk reviews and stakeholder consultation targeting: Director of Water Resources; Director of Planning Services /Department of Agriculture
	EQ 2.1.c: To what extent has agriculture resilience increased in the Gambia?	This assesses the contributions of the various vegetable garden schemes to increased resilience.	Desk reviews and stakeholder consultation targeting: regional directors of agriculture; female gardeners
	EQ 2.1.d: To what extent has livestock-sector resilience increased in the Gambia?	This assesses the contributions of the various poultry and small ruminant schemes to increased resilience.	Desk reviews and stakeholder consultation targeting: regional directors of livestock; poultry scheme beneficiaries; small ruminant scheme beneficiaries
	EQ 2.1.e: To what extent has the knowledge and awareness of climate change and mitigating measures increased due to the project? EQ 2.1.f: To what extent has the knowledge gained been utilized by the project beneficiaries and the implementing partners?	This assesses the functioning of a national platform for climate services and how weather and climate information products are disseminated to regions targeted by the project. This assesses how the knowledge gained is utilized in various adaptation measures.	Desk reviews and beneficiary consultation: regional water resources focal points; regional weather stations; selected project beneficiaries and implementing partners
Results – intended impact			
EQ 2.2: To what extent has the project contributed to decreasing climate change vulnerability within the agriculture and livestock sectors in the project's implementation areas?	EQ 2.2.a: Are the planned community garden schemes established and operational?	This assesses the activities implemented and how they would contribute to the attainment of the project's intended impact.	Desk reviews, individual questionnaires, and stakeholder consultation targeting: regional directors from the agriculture and livestock sector; female garden producers; individual poultry and livestock producers
	EQ 2.2.b: Are the planned community poultry and livestock schemes established and operational?		
	EQ 2.2.c: What is the level of income generated from the various livelihood improvement schemes (vegetable gardens, poultry, small ruminants)?		
	EQ 2.2.d: How have the project interventions built community resilience to the impact of climate change and variability?	This assesses the level of contribution of the project interventions towards building resilience and livelihood improvements in the targeted communities.	Consultations with the target communities, the extension network and the implementing partners
	EQ 2.2.e: What has been the added value by FAO, the implementing partners and other key	This assesses the level of contribution in terms of value-added activities by FAO and the implementing partners.	Direct consultations with FAO, the implementing partners, and other key

Evaluation questions	Subquestions/indicators	Comments	Methods/informants
	stakeholders towards resilience building against climate change and variability?		stakeholders and communities alongside a desk review
	EQ 2.2.f: What factors contributed to the attainment of project impact, and how could these be further strengthened and sustained?	This reviews the key drivers of success and how these are sustained.	Direct consultations with FAO, the implementing partners, and other key stakeholders and communities alongside a desk review
Progress towards impact			
EQ 2.3: To what extent may the progress towards long-term impact be attributed to the project?	EQ 2.3.a: Is there evidence of environmental stress reduction and environmental status change in policy/legal/regulatory frameworks?	Beneficiary responses and PIRs	FGDs and KIIs targeting: Project Coordinator and M&E Officer; core project management team
	EQ 2.3.b: Are there any barriers or other risks that may prevent future progress towards long-term impact of the project? How could these be effectively addressed, if any?	Beneficiary responses and PIRs	
	EQ 2.3.c: What could be considered as major project contributions towards long-term impact?		
	EQ 2.3.d: What could be considered key drivers for the attainment of such project contributions towards long-term impact?		
	EQ 2.2.e: How could such key drivers be sustained in the long-term?		
Efficiency			
EQ 3.1: To what extent has the project been implemented efficiently and cost-effectively?	EQ 3.1.a: To what extent has the project built on existing agreements, initiatives, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other projects and partnerships and avoided the duplication of similar activities by other groups and initiatives?	The focus will be on the systems, processes and procedures aimed at enhancing efficiency. Additionally, existing partnership agreements will be reviewed with to assess synergies and complementarities.	Desk reviews and stakeholder interviews targeting: FAO/PMU; project steering committee; Director General, Department of Agriculture; Director General, Department of Livestock Services
	EQ 3.1.b: To what extent has project management been able to adapt to any changing conditions to improve the efficiency of project implementation?	This involves a review of the MTR and project steering committee meetings.	
	EQ 3.1.c: To what extent has the project implementation model been efficient in terms of value for money and cost efficiency?	This assesses the cost-effectiveness of various project interventions in terms of value for money and timeliness in resource utilization in the overall execution of interventions vis-à-vis project impact.	Literature review, direct consultations with FAO, implementing partners, other key stakeholders and beneficiary communities

Evaluation questions	Subquestions/indicators	Comments	Methods/informants
	EQ 3.1.d: What suggestions do you have towards improving efficiency in this and future projects of this nature?	This explores and harvests new ideas or suggestions towards improving efficiency.	Direct consultations with FAO, implementing partners, other key stakeholders and beneficiary communities
Sustainability			
EQ 4.1: What is the likelihood that the project results will continue to be useful or remain even after the end of the project?	EQ 4.1.a: What are the key risks which may affect the sustainability of the project benefits in terms of economic, environmental, institutional and social sustainability?	This assesses the project's exit strategy and roles of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Livestock Services, and establishes community structures in sustaining project gains.	FAO/PMU; roject steering committee; Department of Agriculture and Department of Livestock Services
	EQ 4.1.b: Have issues of sustainability been sufficiently planned and managed within the project context to mitigate the identified risks?		
	EQ 4.1.c: To what extent is this project likely to build upon results achieved at the country level, particularly in light of the new GEF financing cycle (GEF-8) or through other potential donors?		
Factors affecting performance			
Implementation	EQ 5.1.a: To what extent did FAO deliver on project identification, concept preparation, appraisal preparation, approval and start up, oversight and supervision? EQ 5.1.b: How well were risks identified and managed? EQ 5.1.c: To what extent were responsibilities delineated and implemented in a complementary manner among the implementing partners? EQ 5.1.d: What challenges were encountered in the implementation of project activities? How did these impact project outputs, and how were they addressed? EQ 5.1.e: What could have been done differently to improve project performance?	M&E progress reports, field mission reports, PIRs, financial reports	Desk review; FAO/PMU; M&E Officer; project account
5.2 Execution	EQ 5.2.a: To what extent did the execution agency effectively discharge its role and responsibilities related to the management and administration of the project?		

Evaluation questions	Subquestions/indicators	Comments	Methods/informants
	<p>EQ 5.2.b: Have issues of joint programming between and among the implementing partners been sufficiently addressed to create synergy and avoid the duplication of efforts/resources?</p> <p>EQ 5.2.c: What challenges were encountered in the project execution? What was their impact, and how were these resolved by the executing agency?</p> <p>EQ 5.2.d: Any ideas or suggestions to improve the execution rate of this and/or future projects of this nature?</p>		
5.3 M&E	<p>EQ 5.3.a: M&E design: Was the M&E plan practical and sufficient?</p> <p>EQ 5.3.b: M&E implementation: Did the M&E system operate as per the M&E plan?</p> <p>EQ 5.3.c: Was information gathered in a systematic manner, using appropriate methodologies?</p> <p>EQ 5.3.d: Was the information from the M&E system appropriately used to make timely decisions and foster learning during project implementation (adaptive management)?</p> <p>EQ 5.3.e: How effective has the reporting system been in terms of quality, timeliness and feedback mechanisms?</p> <p>EQ 5.3.f: What would you consider as the key weakness/es of the M&E and reporting system, and how could these be resolved?</p>		
5.4 Financial management and co-financing	<p>EQ 5.4.a: To what extent did the expected co-financing materialize, and how did a shortfall in co-financing affect the project results?</p> <p>EQ 5.4.b: What could have been done to avoid such shortfalls in co-financing?</p> <p>EQ 5.4.c: What has been done to bridge the gap created by the shortfall in co-financing, and has this been effective or otherwise?</p>		
5.5 Project partnership and stakeholder engagement	EQ 5.5.a: Were other actors such as civil society, Indigenous Peoples or the private sector involved		

Evaluation questions	Subquestions/indicators	Comments	Methods/informants
	in project design or implementation, and what was the effect on the project results?		
	EQ 5.5.b: How would you gauge such partnerships and reasons for such a rating?		
	EQ 5.5.c: How could such partnerships/stakeholder engagements be further strengthened to ensure the sustainability of project gains?		
5.6 Communications, knowledge management and knowledge products	EQ 5.6.a: How is the project assessing, documenting and sharing its results, lessons learned and experiences?		
	EQ 5.6.b: To what extent are communications products and activities likely to support the sustainability and scaling up of project results?		
	EQ 5.6.c: Have there been any communication barriers? How did these impact the project, and how were these addressed?		
	Eq 5.6.d: How were the knowledge products generated and utilized in the project context?		
	EQ 5.6.e: What could have been done differently to enhance the area of knowledge management and knowledge products?		
ESS			
EQ 6.1: To what extent were the ESS taken into account in designing and implementing the project?	EQ 6.1.a: Was an environmental impact and social assessment conducted at the design stage of the project?	Beneficiary responses and PIRs	FGDs and KIIs targeting: Project Coordinator and M&E Officer, project beneficiaries and implementing partners
	EQ 6.1.b: How have the ESS been considered during project implementation?	This assesses the extent to which the ESS were considered during project implementation and how these impacted project performance.	
	EQ 6.1.c: How have these ESS impacted project outputs, outcomes and impact?		
Gender			
EQ 7.1: To what extent were gender considerations taken into account in designing the	EQ 7.2.a: Has the project been implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits?	Beneficiary responses and PIRs	FGDs and KIIs targeting: Project Coordinator and M&E Officer; core project management team

Evaluation questions	Subquestions/indicators	Comments	Methods/informants
project? Was the project implemented in a manner that ensures gender equitable participation and benefits?	EQ 7.2.b: Have there been gender-disaggregated data?	Beneficiary responses and PIRs	
	EQ 7.2.c: How have the most vulnerable populations been involved in the project design, implementation and benefits?		
	EQ 7.2.d: How have the agency of women and youth been built within the project context in terms of their involvement in decision-making and holding leadership positions as key drivers towards building resilience to the impact of climate change and variability?		
Lessons learned			
EQ 8.1: What are the most critical lessons that have been learned from implementing this project?	EQ 8.1.a: What knowledge has been generated from project results and experiences, which have a wider value and potential for broader application, replication and use?	Beneficiary responses and PIRs	FGDs and KIIs targeting: Project Coordinator and M&E Officer; core project management team; implementing partners; beneficiaries
	EQ 8.1.b: What have been the key challenges faced in implementing this project?		
	EQ 8.1.c: Have these challenges been effectively addressed in the project context? If yes, how? If not, then why not?		
	EQ 8.1.d: Based on the lessons learned and the current context, what recommendations exist in terms of refocusing the project interventions?		
	EQ 8.1.e: Have the lessons learned been generally utilized in the project context and beyond?		

Appendix 6b. Evaluation design, methodology and additional information

Key stakeholders interviewed and corresponding method applied, November 2023

Selection of respondents

A stratified random sampling method was used to ensure representativeness throughout the selection process. In each of the project intervention regions, a representative sample of districts was randomly selected, and in each district, a sample of communities was drawn using the same random selection procedure. The selection process was guided by key criteria including, but not limited to: districts and communities with large coverage; the intensity of key project intervention activities that are representative of the different project components; the geographical spread of the districts within a given region; and the distribution of communities within a given district. The gender dimensions of the study were also considered, especially in determining the number and category of people to be involved in the evaluation at the community level. The sample was drawn from the main list of communities, covering related project activities and groups of people or individuals involved in each district. In some instances, deliberate selections were made as an affirmative action towards ensuring the involvement of the most vulnerable populations: women; youth; people with disabilities; and key influential people within the project context.

In consideration of the above, an overall total of nine districts and 14 communities were selected across the project intervention regions. This included four districts and six communities in North Bank, three districts and five communities in Central River, north, and two districts and three communities in North Bank, north (see the corresponding table).

At the national level and through prior engagement with the project team, it was found necessary to select the most active ministries, agencies, departments, and other key stakeholders and partners involved in the project interventions. This enabled the Evaluation Team to acquire the most relevant and up-to-date information about the status of the project and impact of the activities at institutional and community levels. A total of 17 institutions were selected at the national level, including:

- i. eight active member ministries, agencies and departments of the project steering committee (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources, NEA, NARI, Department of Water Resources); and
- ii. nine other key stakeholder agencies (Department of Agriculture, National Livestock Owners Association, Department of Livestock Services, Anti-Crime Unit, National Seed Secretariat, FAO, NDMA, Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency, National Coordinating Organization for Farmers Association in the Gambia).

Stakeholder/intervention -or- Key activity areas to explore	Proposed date	Location	Key contact person	Mode of engagement/data collection
National-level consultation from 1 to 14 November 2022				
Ministry of Agriculture, Central Projects Coordination Unit	From 1 to 14 November 2022 (stakeholders will be met with as appointments are confirmed)	Banjul	Bintou Gassama, Deputy Permanent Secretary	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment		Banjul	Pa Modou Manneh	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs		Banjul	Ebrima Darboe	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
NEA		Kanifing	Dawda Badgie The GEF focal point: Njagga Touray	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
FAO		Fajara	Mustapha Ceesay Assistant FAO Representative (Programming)	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
Department of Agriculture		Bakau	Saikou Sanyang	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
Department of Water Resources		Banjul	Peter Gibba	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
NARI		Brikama	Demba Trawalleh	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
Department of Livestock Services		Abuko	Ebou Jobe	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
National Seed Secretariat		Abuko	Morro Manga	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
National Livestock Owners Association		Brikama	Ebrima O. Jallow	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
National Coordinating Organization for Farmers Association in the Gambia		Brikama	Musa Sowe	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
North Bank from 15 to 17 November 2022				
Meeting with the RTAT members, Kerewan Nyakoi	From 15 to 16 November 2022	Kerewan Nyakoi	Regional Agriculture Director, North Bank John Mendy Regional Livestock Director, North Bank Sarjo Camara Regional Forestry Officer Bakary Jarju Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project Regional Coordinator, North Bank Lamin Daffeh Extension staff: two Crop extension staff: Omar Sonko Livestock extension staff: Pateh Sowe	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
Institutional capacity building, vegetable garden scheme, M&E issues Beekeeping scheme Small ruminants scheme		Jufureh (Upper Niimi district)	Momodou Janneh (male) Fatou Bah (female) Suntu Jatta (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories

Stakeholder/intervention -or- Key activity areas to explore	Proposed date	Location	Key contact person	Mode of engagement/data collection
Post-harvest milling machine				
Deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens, livestock boreholes, stock routes, M&E issues	17 November 2022 (including travel time to the next region)	Samba Chargeh (Jorkadu district)	Samba Jarri Sowe (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Institutional capacity building, vegetable garden scheme, drought-tolerant crop seeds, production and demonstrations, M&E issues		Kerr Selleh (Jokadou district)	Kumba Touray (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens, livestock boreholes, stock routes, M&E issues		Dobo (Central Badibou district)	Amadou Jallow (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Institutional capacity strengthening, vegetable garden scheme, drought-tolerant crop seeds, production and demonstrations, M&E issues		Kunjo (Sabach Sanjal district)	Tumbul Jammeh	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Broiler scheme		Nyang Kunda (Sabach Sanjal district)	Awa Faal (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Central River, north from 18 to 20 November 2022				
Meeting with the RTAT members, Kuntaur	From 18 to 19 November 2022 (stakeholders will be engaged with through face-to-face interviews)	Kuntaur	Regional Agriculture Director: Mustapha Bah Regional Livestock Director: Ebou Jobe Regional Forestry Officer: Ebrima Sanneh Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project Regional Coordinator, Central River, north and Upper River, north: Ousainou Sanyang Extension staff: two Crop extension staff: Musa Kanyi, Wassu Livestock extension staff: Samba Camara, Wassu	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
Institutional capacity strengthening, vegetable garden scheme, M&E issues Small ruminants scheme Beekeeping units Broiler scheme Post-harvest milling machines	20 November 2022	Genji Wolof (Lower Saloum district)	Abdou Ceesay (male) Ndey Jobe (female) Cherry Sowe (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Vegetable garden scheme Beekeeping scheme Broiler scheme		Wassu (Niani district)	Sonnah Duganda (female) Rokiya Dumbuya (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories

Stakeholder/intervention -or- Key activity areas to explore	Proposed date	Location	Key contact person	Mode of engagement/data collection
		Wassu Fandema Kafo	Mama Sanneh (female)	
Land rehabilitation for tidal irrigation scheme		Kuntaur Fulla Kunda (Niani)	Fullo Jawneh (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Institutional capacity strengthening, vegetable garden scheme, drought-tolerant crop seeds, production and demonstrations, M&E issues Beekeeping schemes Small ruminant schemes Broiler schemes		Lamin Koto (Sami)	Fanta Comma (female) Saibo Sanyang (male) Mam Tunkara (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens, livestock boreholes, stock routes, M&E issues		Demfai (Sami)	Kekuta Fadia (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Upper River, north from 21 to 23 November 2022				
Meeting with RTAT members, Basse	From 21 to 22 November 2022	Basse	Regional Agriculture Director, Upper River: Karamo Minteh Regional Livestock Director, Upper River: Ebrima Fofana Regional Forestry Officer, Upper River: Yankuba Bajo Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project Regional Coordinator: Ousainou Sanyang Extension staff Crop extension staff: Livestock extension officer: Abdoulie Trawally	Face-to-face using KIIs or SSIs
Institutional capacity strengthening, vegetable garden scheme, drought-tolerant crop seeds, production and demonstrations, M&E issues Broiler scheme Beekeeping scheme Small ruminants scheme		Kuwonkuba (Sandu district) Kuwonkuba Yiriwa Kafo	Jalamang Touray (male) Jalamang Touray (male) Nemuna Camara (female) Fenda Sanneh (female)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Vegetable garden scheme Beekeeping Broiler scheme Small ruminants scheme	23 November 2022	Kerewan Nyakoi (Wulli West)	Jaka Dibbasy (female) Lamin Sidibeh (male) Bunda Jawara (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories
Deferred grazing areas, intensive feed gardens,		Sutukonding (Wulli West)	Mawdo Jatta (male)	FGDs, KIIs and collection of success stories

Stakeholder/intervention -or- Key activity areas to explore	Proposed date	Location	Key contact person	Mode of engagement/data collection
livestock boreholes, stock routes, M&E issues				

Overall summary for interviews at the community level

Region	No. districts	No. communities	No. extension staff	No. of community respondents/contacts		
				Male	Female	Total
North Bank	4	6	6 (Regional Agriculture Director, Regional Livestock Director, Regional Forestry Officer, Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project Regional Coordinator and two extension staff, Kerewan Nyakoi)	2	4	6
Central River, north	3	5	6 (Regional Agriculture Director, Regional Livestock Director, Regional Forestry Officer, Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project Regional Coordinator and two extension staff, Kuntaur)	3	5	8
Upper River, north	2	3	6 (Regional Agriculture Director, Regional Livestock Director, Regional Forestry Officer, Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change project Regional Coordinator and two extension staff, Basse)	3	3	6
3 regions	9 districts	14 communities	18 (extension staff)	8	12	20

Annex

Annex 1. Terms of reference

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