



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/B.41-42/5
05 January 2024

Adaptation Fund Board

**REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF PROJECT COMPLETION
DATE: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
(TAJIKISTAN)**

Background

1. The Adaptation Fund Board (the Board), during the intersessional period between its thirty-third and thirty-fourth meetings, approved a four-year project titled “An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan”, submitted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for a requested amount of US\$ 9,996,441 (Decision B.33-34/20).
2. The objective of the proposed project is to enhance the livelihoods of the small-scale farmers and pastoralists living in the Kofirnighan River Basin under future climate change conditions. Such conditions are expected to include increased frequencies and intensities of extreme climate events such as intense rainfall, flooding and droughts. This is enabled through implementing a suite of interventions that focus on Integrated catchment management to build climate resilience, Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA), including Climate smart Agriculture and Sustainable Land Management, in agroecological landscapes, and knowledge management on building climate resilience through integrated catchment management and EbA in the Kofirnighan River Basin (KRB).
3. As mandated by the decision, an agreement was prepared and signed between the Board and UNDP on 21 October 2019 and the programme started implementation on 28 August 2021.
4. To date, the project Implementing Entity submitted two project performance reports (PPRs), all have been cleared by the secretariat. An amount of US\$ 8,136,171 including the project fees, has been disbursed by the trustee, which corresponds to 81.39% of the approved grant.
5. On 20 December 2023, UNDP submitted a request for a regular 12-month no-cost extension of the project completion date, from 28 August 2026 to 28 August 2027. As outlined in the Adaptation Fund Project/Programme Delay Policy (AFB/B.34-35/6), a request for an extension of the project completion date must be submitted by the implementing entity at least six months prior to the official completion date. The submission date of this request is, therefore, in compliance with the aforementioned deadline.
6. The reasons for this request, as outlined in the memo shared by UNDP, are three-fold: i) The Covid – 19 significantly delayed the project commencement, especially the field visits and related data collection that is required for the watershed condition assessments. In fact, data collection has been more challenging than expected due to data and technical capacity limitations at local level. Since this is a EBA project the team had to generate local data which resulted in implementation delays; ii) Assumptions made during the project design regarding the baseline situation (particularly in relation to the status and expected progress of the water sector reform process in the KBR basin and existence of relevant technical extension mechanisms the project could build on) did not hold valid; and iii) Implementation challenges due to new implementation modality for the UNDP country office in Tajikistan (i.e., the introduction of NIM – National execution modality).

Secretariat's review of the request

7. Following a review of the request by the secretariat and considering the explanation provided by UNDP, the secretariat is of the view that this twelve-months extension request is justified. It is noted that this request would allow sufficient time for the project to compensate for accumulated delays encountered, due to different challenges and constraints faced in the project start and implementation; and ensure the fulfillment of the project outputs and outcomes for enhanced sustainability.

8. Finally, the secretariat acknowledges that this no-cost project extension request has been agreed with the Executing Entity, and endorsed by the Designated Authority, in accordance with the Adaptation Fund Policy for Project/Programme Delays, as specified in Annex 1.

Recommendation

9. The Board may consider and decide to approve the request for a twelve-months extension of the project completion date from 28 August 2026 to 28 August 2027, for the project "An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan," as requested by UNDP.

Annex

- 1) Request for a no-cost extension of the project completion date from UNDP for the project "An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan".

Annex 1: Request for an extension of the programme completion date

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF CONCRETE ADAPTATION PROJECT/PRORAMME

Implementing Entity Name: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)			
AF Project/programme ID: TJK/MIE/Rural/2018/1			
Project/programme Title: An integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of smallscale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan			
Country: Tajikistan			
Project/Programme Approval (date)	08-July-2019		
Expected Project/programme Completion (date)	28-August-2026	Proposed Revised Completion (date):	28-August-2027

Reasons/justifications for the extension of project/programme completion:

The largest component of the project aims to support local level (jamoat) watershed management in 14 target jamoats in the Kofirnighaan river basin and the introduction of Ecosystem based approaches, SLM and climate smart conservation agriculture/livelihoods within 100 villages in these jamoats (approx. 46000 direct beneficiaries, 1500 ha. Applied EbA, approx. 79% of budget). These approaches aim to increase the climate change resilience of target populations in the Kofirnighan river basin and provide replicable approaches for future upscaling. Implementation of such activities (integrated watershed management and EbA approaches, etc.) are nature based and require multiple seasons of introduction and demonstration to be impactful. Additionally, the high inter year variability of seasons in Tajikistan requires such activities to be implemented over multiple years to reduce risk of failure.

In the original project document multi-year workplan, Watershed Action Plan development activities were expected to be initiated in the 1st Quarter of the 1st year, and initiation of EbA interventions by 4th Quarter of 2nd year (allowing 3.5 years for implementation by EoP March 2026).

In practice, the jamoat watershed action plan (WAPs) development was only initiated in the 1st Quarter of year 2, more than 12 months after project start date (i.e., project start date March 2021, WAPs development initiated approx. March 2022). EbA intervention implementation is predicted to be initiated in January 2024 (i.e., approx. 4 Quarter of year 3 of the project).

This leaves only 2 years for implementing an originally planned 3.5 year set of EbA interventions which is technically inadequate and has a high risk of failure.

The reasons for the delays in commencement of these two key and inter-related Outputs include:

- The Covid – 19 significantly delayed the project commencement, especially the field visits and related data collection that's required for the watershed condition assessments. In fact,

data collection has been more challenging than expected due to data and technical capacity limitations at local Jamoat level. Since this is a EBA project the team had to generate Local data which resulted in implementation delays.

- Additionally, assumptions made during the project design regarding the baseline situation (particularly in relation to the status and expected progress of the water sector reform process in the KBR basin and existence of relevant technical extension mechanisms the project could build on did not hold valid.

And lastly, this is among the first projects in Tajikistan to apply a new implementation modality of NIM – National Execution for UNDP projects in Tajikistan. This is a shift from previous DIM modality. Hence, the delays in processes, requiring additional time and attention to exercise due diligence and quality assurance.

- Implementation challenges due to new implementation modality for Tajikistan / UNDP Co in Tajikistan (i.e., the introduction of NIM – National execution modality).

Due to the above delays in Watershed action plan development and initiation of EbA interventions the project requires an extension of 12 months. This will provide a full 3-year implementation of EbA interventions in the 14 target jamoats and 100 villages by the Terminal Evaluation date and ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of impacts.

We also confirm that Project Management Costs will not exceed the originally approved PMC costs in the project budget.

Implementing Entity Certification

This request has been prepared in accordance with Adaptation Fund policies and procedures, has been agreed by participating executing entities, and the designated authority (DA) has been notified.



Executive Coordinator & Director – Environmental Finance
Bureau for Policy and Programme Support/ Global Policy Network

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Date: 12 December 2023

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