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**REPORT ON COMPLETED PROJECTS, PRE-PROJECTS
AND BWP PROJECT-BASED ACTIVITIES**

IN THE FIELD OF REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

REPORT ON COMPLETED PROJECTS AND PRE-PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF REFORESTATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

(A) COMPLETED PRE-PROJECTS

None.

(B) COMPLETED PROJECTS

- (1) **PD 836/17 Rev.2 (F) Enhancing Capacity of Local Communities and Forest Administration to Effectively Implement Community Forestry Programme (CFP) in Kratie and Mondulkiri Provinces of Cambodia (Cambodia)**

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	480,758
ITTO Budget:		US\$	417,558
Government of Republic of Korea	US\$	267,557	
Government of USA:	US\$	100,000	
Government of Japan:	US\$	50,000	
Government of Cambodia		US\$	63,200

Implementing Agency: Forest Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia

Period of Approval: Rev.2: Approved in February 2021

Starting Date and Duration: October 2021 / 36 months

Approved Revised Date of Project Completion: Extension until 31 December 2024 (NOLF.24-0065)

I. Introduction

This project was initially approved in the 2017 Project Cycle and received partial funding of US\$100,000 from the Republic of Korea at ITTC 54 in November 2018. Additional funding was secured during subsequent ITTC meetings, with contributions from the Republic of Korea (US\$ 167,557) and the USA (US\$50,000) at the ITTC 55 in December 2019, and further support from the USA (US\$50,000) and Japan (US\$50,000) at ITTC 56 in November 2020. The Implementing Agency revised the approved project document based on the available funds, and this revised project document was approved in February 2021.

Following the completion of the project agreement in June 2021, the Implementing Agency initiated project activities in October 2021. The second PSC meeting took place on 9 May 2023, held in a hybrid format at the Forestry Administration of Cambodia, with 19 participants, including representatives from donor countries. The third PSC meeting was held on 21 March 2024 in Phenom Penh to review the project's progress and provide strategic recommendations for further implementation. The original project period was 36 months, scheduled to end in September 2024. However, a three-month no-cost extension was requested and approved, extending project completion to the end of December 2024.

II. Project Objective

Coordination among the ministries involved in forest resource management in Cambodia remains insufficient, primarily due to sectoral interest and bias. While there is some exchange of information regarding forest land use conflicts, land classification, and allocation, it does not adequately address the significant challenges posed by forest land issues, particularly those affecting local community livelihoods, housing, and industrial development.

The project aims to promote the sustainable development of a community forestry program (CFP), to enhance the livelihoods of local communities while supporting the effective implementation of SFM in Cambodia. Its specific objective is to build the capacity of local communities and the Forest Administration to effectively implement CFP in the Kratie and Monduliri provinces regions, which are rich in forest resource but facing high deforestation rates.

III. Project Achievements and Outputs

Planned Indicators	Achievements
Three hundred copies of technical manual and 82 copies of forest cover maps distributed to CFMUs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Guidelines for the Preparation of Community Forest Management and Development Plans approved by FA under MAFF. Five hundred copies of the Guidelines for the Preparation of CF Management and Development Plans in Khmer were published for distribution to the Forestry Administration at national and provincial levels, as well as to other stakeholders. Eighty-two Community Forestry land cover maps were produced and distributed to Community Forestry Management Committees in Kratie and Monduliri provinces to support community forestry activities by providing updated land cover information for conducting forest inventories.
One hundred CFMUs trained in the development of management plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three training sessions on writing community forest management and development plans were conducted in Kratie province, with a total of 100 Community Forestry members attending from 34 community forestry groups.
Additional 50 management plans approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thirteen CF management plans have been approved.
One hundred CFMUs trained in business development and agroforestry livelihood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four trainings on the benefits of establishing agroforestry and soil Improvement techniques were conducted in 2024, with 102 participants in attendance, including 31 women and CFMC members from 38 community forestry group - 33 in Kratie and 5 in Monduliri province.
Two Smallholder Farmers (SHF) operational in two provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One SHF was operational in Monduliri province instead of two because there was an existing SHF operation in Kratie.
Two monitoring plans for CF operations developed in two provinces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The monitoring plan, along with a practical reporting format for CF operations and community members in the two provinces, was approved in Khmer by FA Cantonments of Kratie and Monduliri in October 2024. One hundred fifty copies of the monitoring plans in Khmer were printed and distributed to the FA Cantonments of Kratie and Monduliri.

Operation of collaborative forest patrolling piloted in 2 provinces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two joint collaborative forest patrolling were established and operational in two provinces which include FA officials, CFMCs, commune police, district authorities and other stakeholders.
Incentive guideline on private involvement endorsed by FA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The incentive guidelines for involving the private sector and NGOs in the development of livelihoods for local communities were endorsed.

IV. **Outcomes and Impacts**

Outcome 1: Enhanced Capacity of Local Communities (LCs) and Forestry Administrations (FAs) in Community Forestry Management Planning

- Developed key policy documents including:
 - Guidelines for the preparation of community forest management and development plans,
 - Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for forest patrols,
 - Monitoring plans for community forest management and development,
 - Quick review schedule for effective assessment.
- These interconnected policies provided essential milestones for strengthening community forest protection and development.
- They also offered practical guidance to accelerate the implementation of the community forestry program, particularly in Kratie and Monduliri provinces.
- Capacity building activities increased knowledge and skills of Community Forestry Management Committees (CFMCs), FA officials, and other stakeholders.
- Livelihood skills enhancement included agroforestry introduction as a collective practice, supported by piloting and demonstration activities, which improved understanding of agroforestry benefits.

Outcome 2: Promotion of Local Communities' Capacity to Operationalize Approved Management Plans

- Comprehensive discussion, assessment, and final selection of community forestry sites for microcredit and agroforestry implementation were conducted with CFMCs using multiple criteria.
- Commune authorities actively supported microcredit capital provision for four community forests in Kratie and Monduliri and the establishment of an agroforestry demonstration site in Kratie.
- The project team collaborated with the microcredit team to review and monitor microcredit management and support CFMCs in agroforestry monitoring.
- Microcredit initiatives successfully contributed to improving livelihoods.
- CFMCs and microcredit teams are expected to continue managing microcredit and agroforestry initiatives post-project, sustaining benefits related to livelihoods and forest protection.

Outcome 3: Elevated Capacity of Forestry Administrations in Monitoring and Reporting Community Forestry Operations

- Training on guidelines emphasized data collection and processing, focusing on community forest inventory, management plan writing, and field practice involving CFMCs and community forestry members in Kratie and Monduliri.
- CFMCs are actively using guidelines and knowledge gained to enhance community forest management and development plans.
- Training in SOP for forest patrols enabled patrolling and joint patrolling by FA Cantonments, CFMCs, commune police, and local authorities.
- Joint patrolling efforts supported by the project led to successful crackdowns on illegal community forestry activities and restoration of cleared forests.
- SOP and joint patrolling have significantly improved data collection and enforcement against illegal forest activities.

V. Lessons Learnt and sustainability

- Experience in conducting training on various aspects of community forestry (CF) management helped develop a solid training program for community forestry and livelihood development.
- The enhanced capacity of Forestry Administrations (FAs) and Local Communities (LCs) expanded beyond Kratie and Mondulkiri provinces to other provinces as well, reflecting the national importance of the CF program.
- These guidelines will be used by Community Forestry Management Committees (CFMCs), the Forestry Administration, and other stakeholders nationwide, not limited to Kratie and Mondulkiri.
- Publication and distribution of guidelines and related documents will continue to CFMCs, Forestry Administration cantonments in other provinces, line departments, and NGOs.
- The project faced external challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a more significant and prolonged impact than expected; however, mitigation measures were prepared to reduce negative effects on implementation.
- Changes in the management structure of the Forestry Administration at cantonment, division, and triage levels—with these units under provincial agriculture, forestry, and fisheries departments rather than the Central FA—did not affect project implementation.
- Early-stage coordination with involved institutions is critical to address challenges and minimize variation. Maintaining close communication with the Project Steering Committee (PSC) enables timely decision-making for successful project outcomes.
- The project's sustainability is supported through continued government funding for key activities post-completion, including allocation of funds for agroforestry and review of community forest management and development plans.
- Forestry Administration cantonments in Kratie and Mondulkiri will continue to manage and oversee project activities in cooperation with Community Forestry Management Committees, supported by the ITTO project.

VI. Concluding Remarks

The ITTO Secretariat has received the project completion report, a technical report and final financial audit, thus the Committee may wish to declare the project as duly completed, subject to the satisfactory review of the final audit report by the ITTO Secretariat. Reports and outreach products produced by the project are available from the project search tool on the ITTO website at https://www.itto.int/project/id/PD836_17-Rev.2-F.

(2) PD 905/19 Rev.3 (F) Providing Support for the Sustainable Management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in the Savanna Region in Togo - Phase I

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget (Phase I):		US\$	260,268
ITTO Budget (Phase I):		US\$	200,000
Government of Japan (MoFA):	US\$	200,000	
Government of Togo (Phase I):		US\$	60,268
Implementing Agency:	AGENCY FOR FOREST DEVELOPMENT AND USE (<i>OFFICE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ET D'EXPLOITATION DES FORÊTS</i> —ODEF)		
Period of Approval:	Rev.3: Approved in March 2023		
Starting Date and Duration:	August 2023 / 18 months (for Phase I)		

Approved Revised Date of
Project Completion:

Extension until April 2025 [NOL F.25-0014]

I. Introduction

The approval of this 36-month project was in September 2019 through the electronic approval system for the project cycle of 2019. The project was partially financed with an amount of US\$200,000 thanks to the generous contribution of Japan during the inter-session period between ITTC 58 and ITTC 59. As the project was partially funded, it was revised into a phased project, which was approved in March 2023. The Project Agreement governing Phase 1 was signed by all parties in May 2023. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds was made in August 2023 after the reception by the ITTO Secretariat of an acceptable Inception Report and its associated Detailed Work Plan.

One no-cost project extension was granted until April 2025 by the ITTO Secretariat, based on official requests including proper justification with appropriate detailed work plan and a revised budget. The project completion report was received in July 2025, with the project operation period lasting 23 months instead of the initial 18 months designed by the implementing agency (ODEF). The project final financial audit report was carried out by MAZARS-Japan during the preparation of this report, so that this project could be documented for the completion and closure procedures. The Phase II of the project is partially funded with the amount of USD50,000 thanks to the generous contribution of USA. There is an outstanding balance of USD232,624 needed for Phase II to start implementation.

II. Project Objective

The overall aim of the project was to improve the living conditions of the population of the Prefecture of Tône and Tandjoaré through the sustainable management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest. The project's intent was to contribute to sustainably managing the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest in order to improve the living conditions and environment of the local communities.

The Phase I and Phase II of the project are aimed at delivering the three following expected outputs: (1) Forest resources are used in a rational way, (2) Land is used sustainably, and (3) Stakeholders are organized and have good knowledge of forest management. These three expected outputs were partially delivered during Phase I, as described below.

III. Project Achievements and Outputs

The main project achievements and outputs, in relation to the project implementation strategy of the first phase, can be summarized as follows:

Activities	Planned indicators for Phase 1	Achievements of Phase 1	% of execution (Phase I & Phase II)
Output 1: Forest resources are used rationally			
Activity 1.3: <i>Generate Flora and Fauna Data</i>	Data on flora and fauna are available	An inventory was designed and conducted of existing - forest, flora and fauna species	Finalized flora and fauna inventory report, which represents 100% of execution compared to the indicators of both Phases.
Output 2: Land is sustainably managed			

Activities	Planned indicators for Phase 1	Achievements of Phase 1	% of execution (Phase I & Phase II)
Activity 2.1: <i>Train stakeholders on good land use practices</i>	500 farmers and herders from the surrounding villages master, practice and disseminate good land use practices	368 actors were trained in the villages of Badori, Konkoaré, Dalouague, Napiembougou, Tambango, Nassiète, Koubongou, Nakpagali, Kpekedoune and Nianague.	368 actors represent about 74% of execution in relation to the indicators of both Phases.
Activity 2.2: <i>Identify and materialize forest boundaries and land use</i>	50 giant demarcation markers, 25 of which have been installed for the first phase and maps improved	26 demarcation markers, or 104% of 25 planned for the first phase, have been installed.	26 demarcation markers represent 52% of execution compared to the indicators of both Phases.
Activity 2.3: <i>Conduct socio-economic studies of the area</i>	Socio-economic data made available	Socio-economic information and data are available as a result of the consultant's surveys.	Report of the national consultant in socio-economic studies finalized. It represents 100% execution for the indicators of both Phases.
Output 3: Stakeholders are organized and have a good knowledge of forest management			
Activity 3.1: <i>Establish and operationalize a consultation framework on participatory forest management</i>	1 Local Joint Forest Management Committee and 8 sub-committees are established and operational	1 Joint Management Committee (JMC) of 19 members + 3 sub-committees of at least 21 members each and a management agreement are available.	This represents 100% implementation for the Joint Management Committee and about 37% for the sub-committees in relation to the indicators of both Phases.
Activity 3.3: <i>Train stakeholders on sustainable forest management tools</i>	50 actors, half of whom are women, are trained and master the tools for sustainable forest management	55 people, including 42 men and 13 women, have been trained, compared to 50 planned.	This represents 168% of implementation for men and 52% for women compared to the indicators of both Phases. Need to train more women during Phase 2.

Some activities implemented during the first phase of this project, which are not fully executed (100%), will continue to be executed together with activities planned for the second phase of this project.

IV. Outcomes and Impacts

By the completion of the first phase of this project, the main project outcomes and impacts, in relation to the expected outputs and associated activities, can be summarized as follows:

- The forestry administration through ODEF and other stakeholders in the area have a better understanding of the limits and resources of the Fosse-aux-Lions Classified Forest, as well as the perspective -for its sustainable and participatory management, for the benefit of all stakeholders, including local communities.
- The impacts of the first phase of this project are in line with actions planned within the framework of national and international sectoral programs and policies, including: National Forest Policy developed

and validated in 2011, National Long-Term Development Strategy based on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2030), National Action Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change, National Action Programme to Combat Desertification, National Agricultural Investment and Food Security Programme, Protected Areas Rehabilitation Programme, etc.

- 10 main villages in target cantons corresponding to more than 90% of the local communities were made aware of the project's objectives. With the installation of the 26 markers, through a participatory approach, the forest demarcation was the first step in bringing together the local communities and the staff of the forestry administration (ODEF) to address the recurring problems of land conflict.

With the demarcation of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest, the land problem has been gradually resolved facilitating the future management plan of this forest, which will be developed and implemented during the execution of the second phase of this project. There has been a positive and progressive awareness on the future of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest, particularly by the village chiefs in both target cantons (Dapaong and Bambouaka) who have sensitized their respective communities. The holding of sensitization meetings and training workshops, as well as the strong representation of relevant stakeholders in the forest management committee have contributed to a positive change in the perspective of these populations in relation to the management prospects of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest.

V. Lessons Learnt and sustainability

The beginning of the project implementation was slow as there was a need to bring together relevant stakeholders that were not trusting each other due to the recurrent land tenure issues occurring in the project target areas in and around the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest. Sensitization campaigns were carried out by the project implementing team, with the involvement of selected local leaders, in order to address the lack of trust. This was a pre-requisite for the smooth implementation of the first phase of this project. As land tenure problems were widespread in the target project areas, as well as in other regions of Togo, this project will surely put in place appropriate mechanisms, once it is finally completed. Lessons learned from both the first and second phases can be good models for addressing land tenure issues in Togo.

To achieve the project's first phase objectives, a joint management committee for the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest has been set up composing of 19 members, 14 of whom are representatives of the local beneficiary communities. This committee is responsible for leading the participatory management of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest. A management agreement has also been approved to serve as a roadmap for this joint management committee of the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest for both phases of this project.

The project was split into two phases to meet the budgetary constraint of donor funding. This phased approach may become a potential risk of the failure of the project, if there is a big time gap between the first phase and the full funding the second phase. This gap could lead to the loss of momentum with stakeholders that was achieved in the first phase. To ensure full success of the project, the full funding of the second phase is highly encouraged. With the amount of US\$50,000 provided by the USA, the balance of funding needed for the second phase is USD232,624. The 2nd phase will provide appropriate support for the development of income-generating activities, including agroforestry activities, to further incentivize relevant stakeholders to be involved in the restoration of degraded forest landscapes in the Fosse-aux-Lions Gazetted Forest, as part of an adopted forest management plan.

VI. Concluding Remarks

The ITTO Secretariat has received the project completion report and technical. The project was subject to the final financial audit carried out by the independent auditor MAZARS-Japan, during the preparation of CRF(LIX)/2 Committee Document. Thus, the Committee may wish to declare the project as duly completed, subject to the satisfactory final audit report carried out by MAZARS-Japan. Reports and outreach products produced by the project are available from the project search tool on the ITTO website at https://www.itto.int/project/id/PD905_19-Rev.3-F-Phase-1

(3) PP-A/56-341B Support for Women's Groups with the Restoration of Forest Landscapes in the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, Togo – Phase III

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	83,798
ITTO Budget:		US\$	72,268
Soka Gakkai (SG):	US\$	89,581	
REFACOF:		US\$	11,530
Implementing Agency:	African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF, in French acronym)		
Starting Date and Duration:	October 2024 / 12 months		
Approved Revised Date of Project Completion:	First extension until 31 December 2024 (NOLF.24-0075)		

I. Introduction

This 12-month BWP Project-based Activity is funded as part of the Third Programme Line (PL3) titled *"Forest Landscape Restoration and Resilient Livelihoods"* under the Programmatic Approach. The third phase of the BWP Project-based Activity was fully funded by Soka Gakkai (SG) through an inter-sessional pledge received after the Fifty-eighth Session of the Council. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) governing the implementation of this third phase of the BWP Project-based Activity was duly signed by all parties (Government of Togo, REFACOF-Togo, Implementing Agency and ITTO Secretariat) in September 2023. The disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds was made in October 2023.

II. Project Objective

The specific objective of the third phase of this BWP Project-based Activity was to further consolidate and sustain the achievements of the two previous phases implemented in the prefectures of Blitta and Lacs in Togo through the establishment of community forests contributing to the restoration of degraded forest landscapes and improving the livelihoods of communities, including women's groups. While promoting women's participation and empowerment in the restoration of degraded forest landscapes.

III. Project Achievements and Outputs

Based on the completion report and most recent information from the implementing agency (REFACOF), the achievements and outputs regarding the implementation of this BWP Project-based Activity can be mainly summarized as follows:

- 13 ha out of 35 ha of Taungya-type plantations and 10 ha of agroforests, which were established by women's groups during the first and second phases of this BWP Project-based Activity, were subject to the enrichment and silviculture-related treatments, while also being protected from wildfires, during the implementation of its third phase.
- 4 ha of new Taungya-type plantations and 4 ha of agroforests had been established by women's groups organized in local associations,
- The technical and material capacities of 150 women from 7 local groups have been strengthened for the development of income-generating activities (IGA), as a source of livelihood for local communities,

- Two houses sheltering the facilities for income-generating activities have been acquired and are used by women's groups for income generating activities (processing food crops, conservation of fishes from a nearby lake),
- Only one out of two motor pumps was purchased for the benefit of the women's groups of Agouegan because of the insufficient amount budgeted for in the ITTO budget. This situation had no impact on the activities of the women's groups of Pagala-Gare, since they benefited from a donation of a motor pump provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development of Togo, as in-kind national counterpart contribution.

The members of women groups have been the main beneficiaries of the outcomes of this BWP Project-based Activity while also being involved in its ground implementation. They effectively participated in the various stages of activities carried out, such as training in nursery seedling production techniques enabling them to produce and maintain 15,357 seedlings of 12 tree species themselves, which were used for the restoration of the abovementioned degraded forest landscapes in the target areas of the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, in Togo. Details of production by site and species are shown in the table below:

AGOUEGAN		PAGALA-GARE	
Species	Number of seedlings	Species	Number of seedlings
<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	246	<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	1 815
<i>Senna Siamea</i>	2 087	<i>Terminalia superba</i>	2 200
<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	537	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	986
<i>Terminalia Superba</i>	500	<i>Senna siamea</i>	2 800
<i>Cola gigantea</i>	30	<i>Vittelaria paradoxa</i>	513
<i>Citrus x limon</i>	150	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	1 400
<i>Citrus x sinensis</i>	150	<i>Albizia lebbeck</i>	728
		<i>Parkia biglobasa</i>	1 215
Total AGOUEGAN	3 700	Total PAGALA-GARE	11 657
Grand Total of seedlings produced: 15 357			

As mentioned above, these tree seedlings were used for the creation of 4 ha of forest plantations using the Taungya method and 4 ha of agroforests. The various tasks related to the establishment of forest plantations and agroforests (clearing, picketing, holing, burial, maintenance and protection) were organized under the leadership of women's groups. The crops associated with the plants were maize, beans, cassava and soybeans. The production of these food crops contributed to the food security of the women involved in the project implementation and their communities, while also being a source livelihood for women's groups involved in the implementation of this BWP Project-based Activity.

IV. Outcomes and Impacts

Phase 3 of PP-A/56-341 helped consolidate the achievements of Phase 1 and Phase 2 with regard to the restoration of degraded areas and local socio-economic development. It has enabled the continuation and diversification of technical and material capacity-building activities for beneficiary women's groups, who are now able to produce seedlings, create plantations, process agricultural products (gari and tapioca from raw cassava tuber, coconut oil production, etc.) and conserve fish products (fish smoking). Phase 3 was implemented with the support of the local administrative and traditional authorities who were already informed and sensitized about the importance of restoring forest landscapes degraded by human activities during the implementation of the first and second phases of PP-A56-341.

The choice of tree species was made by mutual agreement with the beneficiaries based on the speed of tree growth and the multiplicity of uses of these trees for the benefit of women groups. Similarly, food crops associated with trees in forest plantations had been chosen by the women's groups to cover their food needs and contribute to the food security of their communities. Restoration of degraded forest landscape

associated with food crops has proven to be not only an appropriate reforestation tool, but also an asset for improving food security and household livelihoods with larger positive social impacts for their communities.

V. Lessons Learnt and sustainability

The main lessons learnt from the implementation of the Phase 3 of PP-A/56-341 is summarized as follows:

- Agroforestry systems used for the restoration activities associated with food crops contributed to fighting against deforestation and improving food security and household incomes for women's groups involved in the project implementation,
- Women's groups were able to demonstrate leadership and that they were part of the solution in restoring degraded forest lands in their localities through their own initiatives, with the support of PP-A/56-341,
- Securing land availability and use for women's groups was an important and essential pre-requisite and achievement in the creation of sustainable forest and agroforestry plantations in the target areas of the Prefectures of Blitta and Lacs, in Togo.

Regarding the sustainability of the achievements of the Phase 3 of PP-A/56-341: Land sustainability: the women's groups of Pagala-Gare village had property rights over the land used to establish agroforestry plantations. The women's groups of Agouegan village also had property rights over the lands they use for the restoration of degraded forest landscapes,

- Organizational sustainability of women groups: women groups involved in the implementation of the Phase 2 of PP-A/56-341 are well organized, so that they are prepared for the replication of the project implementation approach in other regions of Togo and to contribute to the empowerment other women's groups,
- Administrative sustainability: women groups were supported by the central and decentralized administrative authorities during the implementation of PP-A/56-341, including its Phase 3.

VI. Concluding Remarks

The ITTO Secretariat received the BWP-related Activity completion report, as well as a satisfactory final financial audit report, therefore the Committee may wish to declare the BWP-related Activity PP-A/56-341 as completed. Soft copies of reports can be made available, upon written request, by the Secretariat, as well as from the project search tool on the ITTO website at https://www.itto.int/project/id/PP-A_56-341B-REFACOF--Soka-Gakkai-Phase-3

(4) PP-A/59-351 Community-Based Restoration of Cyclone-Affected Vulnerable Mangrove Forests through the Empowerment of Coastal Communities and Women in the Rewa Delta, Fiji

Budget and Funding Sources:

Total Budget:		US\$	410,000
ITTO Budget:		US\$	350,000
Government of Japan:	US\$	350,000	
Executing Agency:		US\$	60,000
Implementing Agency:	MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND FORESTRY, FIJI		
Starting Date and Duration:	April 2023 to March 2024 / 12 months		
Approved Revised Date of Project Completion:	First extension until December 2024 (MOFA-Japan's letter of 25 March 2024 and ITTO's letter L.24-0021) Second extension until June 2025 (MOFA-Japan's letter of 23 April 2025 and ITTO's letter L.24-0248)		

I. Introduction

The project was developed in early 2023 through Japan's Emergency Budget Programme, based on the successful completion of PD 696/13 Rev.2 (F) "*Community Based Restoration and Sustainable Management of Vulnerable Forests of the Rewa Delta, Fiji*" which contributed to the restoration of degraded mangrove ecosystems and offered various income opportunities for local communities, especially women. The earlier project also contributed to the development of Fiji's Mangrove Management Guidelines with the support of the South Pacific Community (SPC). The project agreement was signed in June 2023 by ITTO and the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry of Fiji, and the disbursement of the first installment of ITTO funds was made in January 2024 after a 6-month process for selecting and hiring of the project coordinator by the Forest Department of Fiji.

Two project no-cost extensions were granted until June 2025 by the ITTO Secretariat, based on official requests including proper justification with appropriate detailed work plan and budget. The project completion report was received in August 2025. The project operation period lasted 20 months instead of the 12 months initially designed by the implementing agency (Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry of Fiji). The project final financial audit report was carried out by MAZARS-Japan during the preparation of this report, so that this project could be documented for the completion and closure procedures.

II. Project Objective

The development objective of this project was to further promote the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of mangrove forest ecosystem while contributing to the resilience of coastal communities and mangrove forest ecosystem to natural disasters in Fiji. Specifically, the project intended to promote community-based restoration of cyclone-affected vulnerable mangrove forests through the empowerment of coastal communities, including women's groups.

III. Pre-project Achievements and Outputs

By the project's completion, the achievements in connection with its four expected outputs and in correlation to the planned activities implemented by this project can mainly be summarized as follows:

Output 1. Local communities were trained to adopt the “Community-based Management Guideline for Mangrove Rehabilitation and Restoration in Fiji” to strengthen governance of mangroves, and women were empowered to participate in the decision-making process for the improvement of existing alternative livelihoods:

- Six Communities (Muanaira, Naivakacau, Narocake, Nasilai, Natila, and Waicoka) were trained in establishing a nursery to produce mangrove seedlings, as well as on alternative livelihood sources activities (cash cropping and home gardening, piggery farming, prawn farming associated with tilapia fish species, etc.).
- The abovementioned communities benefited with the establishment of biogas production, and water tanks (4,500 litres of water capacity each) connected to water pumps.

Output 2. Degraded coastal and mangrove wetland rehabilitated to mitigate climate change through increased carbon sequestration:

- Training workshops were conducted in collaboration with the Forestry Extension Division team in six communities on quality seedlings collection, nursery techniques, and raising of native mangrove species. The training workshops were followed by the delivery of nursery materials for each community.
- Mixed species planting was the mode of restoration activities combining mangrove (*Rhizophora spp.*) with seedlings of native fruit and coastal trees (*Citrus japonica* and *Annona muricata*) adapted to the ecological conditions of the project target areas.
- Purchase of 60,000 pot seedling bags (10,000 for each of six communities covered by the project) for the purpose of producing mangrove seedlings in 2026, as a way to sustain project achievements and contribute to national targets for mangrove restoration throughout Fiji.

Output 3. Empowering women to implement a suite of viable alternative livelihood options, reducing over dependence on coastal and mangrove wetland resources for sustenance and life support:

- Preparation of selected biogas sites associated with piggery waste and water tanks, for the installation of the biogas system to be connected to improved cook stoves six abovementioned communities.
- Feasibility studies were carried out on alternative livelihoods for women, including training in jewelry making, fabric painting, weaving, tailoring, for the establishment of a cooperative store to be managed by local community members. This training was carried out through cooperation with experts from the Ministry of Trade, Cooperative and Small Business Enterprises.

Output 4. Strengthen coordination of policy guidelines to improve communities’ resilience in the face of natural disasters:

- Training workshops, organized with experts from Provincial Administration, on natural disaster preparedness, disaster risk management, and emergency responses to climate change-related disasters, for the purpose of identifying levels of coordination, collaboration and networking among key institutions, in correlation with coastal and mangrove wetlands. The training workshops led to the design of a Disaster Action Plan for those six communities involved in project implementation.
- Training workshops, organized with experts from the Ministry of Agriculture, on ecosystem-based adaptation relating to forestry, water, and agriculture by integrating traditional knowledge and skills on the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources contributing to increase resilience and reduce vulnerability to natural disasters.

IV. Outcomes and Impacts

The project's four outputs clearly illustrate how local communities and women were actively involved in implementation, and how the results directly impacted their lives and will continue to do so. The implementation of this project has provided benefits to the primary beneficiaries and stakeholders involved. The training workshops had equipped the six communities with the necessary skills for mangrove forest management, sustaining harvesting and value-added utilization of alternative livelihood products, as well as biogas utilization (to reduce pressure on forest mangrove as source of fuelwood).

The achievement of project objectives has a significant impact on the perceptions of the public and other institutions on the need to promote the sustainable management of mangrove forest ecosystem in Fiji. The capacity of government authorities to develop policies and regulations on sustainable mangrove rehabilitation and conservation has been improved. The primary beneficiaries and stakeholders involved will continue to benefit from the project's outputs and will follow up the framework and the platform that has been developed through the community-based restoration and sustainable management of vulnerable mangrove forests of the Rewa Delta, as part of the Disaster Action Plan.

V. Lessons Learnt and sustainability

Building on the lesson learned that effective project identification and design are paramount, here are suggested arrangements that could significantly improve cooperation between the governmental entities (ministries and agencies) and other relevant stakeholders involved in the implementation of this project in Fiji:

- Formalized Inter-Ministerial Working Groups/Taskforces proactive for supporting the project,
- Integrated planning and permitting processes with the involvement of relevant project stakeholders,
- Early and continuous stakeholder engagement frameworks are put in place and operational.

By implementing these additional arrangements, Fiji can significantly enhance coordination, reduce bureaucratic hurdles by streamlining internal fund release mechanisms to avoid delaying the release of funds needed for a smooth project implementation, and ensure that projects are technically and financially successful in delivering the expected outputs contributing to achieving the project specific objective.

The sustainability of restored mangrove ecosystems and other livelihood activities will be improved continuously after project completion through three following approaches, as follows:

- Community Empowerment and Ownership: Building local capacity and fostering a sense of ownership over resources, as promoted by training workshops for sensitizing relevant stakeholders to adhere and adapt to a certain lifestyle that is secure and sustainable in six communities involved in the implementation of this project,
- Ecosystem Restoration and Natural Resilience: The introduction of fuel wood planting to replace mangrove fuel wood extraction contributing to ecosystem restoration in six communities involved in the project implementation. Afforestation and reforestation of native species associated with selected fruit trees and food crops had built a way to enhance the food security for communities, while also contributing to prevent coastal erosion,
- Institutional Integration and Policy Support: To ensure the sustainability of alternative livelihood businesses developed through this project, a mangrove guideline was introduced to six communities, to serve as reference by relevant governmental entities (ministries and agencies). This approach also allows communities to integrate their traditional knowledge with existing policies, fostering long-term environmental and economic sustainability.

VI. Concluding Remarks

The ITTO Secretariat has received the project completion report and technical reports (prepared by consultants and sub-contractors). The project was subject to the final financial audit carried out by the independent auditor MAZARS-Japan, during the preparation of CRF(LIX)/2 Committee Document. Thus, the Committee may wish to declare the project as duly completed, subject to the satisfactory final audit report carried out by MAZARS-Japan. Reports and outreach products produced by the project are available from the project search tool on the ITTO website at https://www.itto.int/project/id/PP-A_59-351