

Service in identifying stakeholders and providing training workshops in climate change impacts on agriculture and water in Oman

Final Report

26 September 2024

Citation: Final Report E Co. / FAO
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Last edited: 20 February 2025
Status: Version 1

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Term
MAFWR	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Water Resources
GUTECH	German University of Technology
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UN	Nzo University (UNESCO Chair University of Technology and Applied Sciences)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
OIA	Oman Investment Authority
OIB	Oman Investment Bank
ODB	Oman Development Bank
BM	Bank Muscat
BD	Bank Dhofar
AIB	Al Ahli Islamic Bank
BN	Bank Nizwa
OIF	Oman Investment Fund
OWA	Oman Water Association
OEA	Oman Environment Association
PD	Petroleum Development Oman
LNC	Oman LNG Company
OFA	Oman Farmers Association
MoEd	Ministry of Education
MoEM	Ministry of Energy and Minerals
MoHP	Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning
OCCI	Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry
OMIFCO	Oman-India Fertiliser Company
OFIC	Oman Food Investment Company Holding
NCSI	National Centre for Statistics and Information

Executive Summary

1.1 Overview of assessment purpose and activities

This document serves as the final report of the assignment, with the primary objective of summarising the activities undertaken throughout the project, as well as the lessons learnt and recommendations provided.

The report encompasses the findings from the entire assignment, alongside key insights and recommendations gathered during its implementation. It is important to note that this report reflects the culmination of five months of dedicated work. The recommendations presented are intended for consideration and implementation by the stakeholders' network over the next two years, in alignment with the arrangements outlined in the various deliverables of the assignment.

1.2 Key findings and recommendations

The key results and outcomes of the assignment are outlined as follows:

1. Conducted an analysis of the agriculture and water sectors in Oman, establishing a list of selection criteria for assessing candidacy for the network.
2. Identified and agreed upon a comprehensive list of stakeholders in the agriculture and water sectors.
3. Developed and presented a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the stakeholder network to the relevant stakeholders.
4. Drafted and presented a stakeholder engagement work plan for GCF programming to the network.
5. Developed a knowledge management platform, hosted by the Environment Authority.
6. Conducted a training needs assessment and provided a detailed analysis to the client.
7. Delivered a 2-day workshop in Salalah, Oman on GCF finance access, providing training materials in both Arabic and English.
8. Conducted a 3-day workshop in Salalah, Oman on climate change priorities for agriculture and water, with training materials available in Arabic and English.
9. Submitted a workshop report summarising the activities and outcomes from both workshops.

10. Developed and delivered five briefs and quizzes on climate change topics in both Arabic and English.
11. Compiled a final report summarising all activities carried out under the assignment (the current document).

Summary of the project Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the network formalises its existence by convening a general meeting. This meeting should aim to establish a steering committee, review proposed actions and activities outlined in the ToR, and produce a manifesto to guide the network in setting both strategic and immediate goals.
2. The knowledge management platform should be maintained and monitored to ensure maximum benefit for stakeholders. This will facilitate the development of a project pipeline for the country.
3. The stakeholder engagement plan should be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary, ensuring the network has clear objectives and milestones for the next two years.
4. Continuous training should be provided to keep stakeholders engaged and progressing, fostering the generation of project ideas and supporting pipeline development.
5. It is also advisable to include the network in future initiatives, such as the upcoming forum planned for December. Involving steering committee members in the forum's organisation will give the network a voice in determining the next steps for Oman and ensure sustained stakeholder engagement.

2. Main Activities and Deliverables

2.1 Deliverable 1: Detailed Work Plan

The virtual kick-off meeting, held on 22 April, marked the official inception of the project, bringing together key stakeholders: FAO Oman, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Water Resources (MAFWR), and the National Designated Authority (NDA). During this meeting, the project's overarching goals and objectives were thoroughly discussed, laying the foundation for the upcoming phases.

A key outcome of the meeting was the development and approval of a comprehensive work plan, which clearly outlined the project's timeline and deliverables. This work plan has served as a strategic roadmap, ensuring that all activities are carried out in a coordinated and timely manner.

Additionally, a proposed list of potential stakeholders and relevant documents was submitted alongside the detailed work plan. FAO provided a finalised list of stakeholders in response, further refining the project's scope and stakeholder engagement strategy.

2.2 Deliverable 2: Selection Criteria and Stakeholder List

Deliverable 2 focused on developing a comprehensive stakeholder selection criterion and identifying key stakeholders in the agriculture and water sectors. The selection process encompasses a range of stakeholders, including public and private sector entities, civil society organisations, women's groups, and academic institutions. To ensure a robust and inclusive engagement, the criteria consider several factors, such as relevance to the sector, organisational capacity, geographical representation, sustainability commitment, and innovative potential. Stakeholder identification involved a structured approach, including interviews and focus group discussions to gather insights from various experts and stakeholders in the agriculture and water sectors. This process ensures that key players with the capacity to drive sustainable practices and contribute to climate resilience in Oman are engaged, fostering an integrated network for addressing the sector's challenges.

2.3 Deliverable 3: Terms of Reference (ToR) for Stakeholder Network

Deliverable 3 focused on developing the terms of reference (ToR) for the stakeholder network. The ToR outlines key elements, including the network's purpose, guiding principles, strategic goals, structure, and governance system, as well as the scope of

activities. To ensure the network operates efficiently, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for members, with the establishment of committees and working groups to cover all essential areas.

This ToR lays the groundwork for the network's operations during its initial months, while allowing flexibility for improvements and adaptations. A manifesto will be developed during the first general meeting, with room to revise both the manifesto and the ToR as needed. This foundation will enable the network to contribute meaningfully to building climate resilience in Oman, ensuring the country effectively addresses sector-specific challenges.

2.4 Deliverable 4: Work Plan for Stakeholder Engagement

Deliverable 4 focused on developing a comprehensive work plan for stakeholder engagement within the network. This plan outlines a series of activities and milestones designed to formalise the network's establishment and launch, ensuring that it effectively contributes to the development of the project pipeline in Oman. It also emphasises continuous training and engagement for network members.

The two-year work plan serves as a framework to guide the network's initial operations, providing a clear starting point while allowing for flexibility and adaptation based on the needs of the network. It will be reviewed by the network members and adjusted as necessary. The plan allows for improvements and adjustments to be made during the network's first general meeting and in subsequent meetings. This structured approach helps ensure that the network maintains accountability and plays a meaningful role in advancing climate resilience efforts in Oman.

2.5 Deliverable 5: Online Knowledge Management Platform

The assignment included an activity aimed at establishing a knowledge-sharing platform. To lead its development, an external developer was hired, following E Co.'s drafting of the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the platform, which was agreed upon with the FAO. The design of the platform was based on the [Ashjar](#) website as a template, and its primary objective is to facilitate data sharing, climate projections, and policy information among network members. This will create a central repository for information storage and knowledge exchange.

The platform will be hosted on the Environment Authority's servers, while the network's steering committee will manage it, with specific decisions to be made during the first general meeting. The platform will store documentation related to the agriculture and water sectors relevant to the country, and in some cases, the region. It will also include important policy documents, ensuring better access to key information. Due to the

sensitivity of some documents, certain sections of the website will be password-protected to safeguard sensitive information. Additionally, the platform will feature training materials that support the network's ongoing capacity-building and professional development initiatives.

2.6 Deliverable 6: Report on Training Needs Assessment

A training needs assessment report formed the sixth deliverable in the assignment and its objective is to outline the gaps and needs of the stakeholders to define the necessary activities and needed training to fill the knowledge gap, build pipeline and establish a robust stakeholder's network capable of contributing to the development of projects in the Sultanate of Oman. For that surveys were created and distributed to the stakeholders using an online platform called Typeform. Two surveys were designed and distributed, one in preparation of the consultation meeting held on 27 of August and a second one distributed during the workshop in Salalah, the results from both surveys formed the brunt of the findings and recommendations for the project to inform the training needs assessment and allow for the development of a training roadmap possibly to be prepared by the network for the coming two years covering the milestones set forth in the stakeholder engagement work plan.

The findings of the report indicate that there is a showing disparity in the sectoral representation of the respondents with a heavy representation of public sector for both the consultation survey 66.7% and in the live survey 46.4% which indicates the need to push for the diversification of the network's members. It was noticed also that Most respondents had a moderate level of knowledge about climate change risks and their impacts on agriculture. However, practical experience was lacking with a varied awareness of climate change mitigation solutions. It's also worth noting that the surveys pointed to the need for comprehensive training programmes focusing on climate adaptation strategies, proposal writing for climate funding (e.g., Green Climate Fund), and technical skills for project implementation and the respondents expressed a strong interest in developing their capacity to engage in agriculture and water projects.

2.7 Deliverable 7: Training Package on GCF Access

To address the multifaceted aspects of climate change and its impact on Oman's water and agriculture sectors, E Co. developed a series of comprehensive training material. These presentations cover a wide array of topics, starting with the scientific basis of climate change and its main impacts, particularly on agriculture and water. Delving also into the broader adaptation and mitigation strategies within these sectors, exploring the nuanced debate surrounding the development/adaptation continuum and clarifying the distinction between adaptation and traditional development activities. Additionally, the presentations offer insights into the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) adaptation and mitigation priorities for water and agriculture, aligning with its sectoral guidelines.

Furthermore, gender-sensitive climate change practices and planning were covered, introducing the concept of 'gender and climate change,' its significance, and the intricate relationship between gender equity and climate vulnerability. These presentations offer guidance on integrating gender considerations into project design and implementation, formulating gender action plans, and monitoring gender inclusion in adaptation and mitigation projects., it's also worth noting that group exercises were included during the two days of workshop, further detail about that is included in deliverable 9 “the training report”.

Case studies were also presented giving a different perspective to the stakeholders on how climate change is approached in other countries in the region, the first case study presented was from Jordan and a second one from the horn of Africa. The workshop ended with an evaluation that saw an impressive 100% rate of trainees that would recommend the training to colleagues.

2.8 Deliverable 8: Training Package on Climate Change Priorities for Agriculture and Water

Over the course of the three-day workshop, participants engaged in comprehensive activities focused on GCF processes, climate change impacts, and prioritising projects for agriculture and water. On Day 1, the workshop began with an introduction and recap of previous group work, followed by an overview of GCF project idea note (PIN) development. Participants worked in groups to develop and present PINs for agriculture and water sectors. Presentations on climate change in Oman and its impact on crop production and water resources were followed by discussions on GCF project preparation tools. The afternoon was dedicated to exploring climate data, hazards, vulnerabilities, and data source mapping through group exercises. Day 2 focused on climate solutions, starting with GCF sectoral guides on agriculture and water, followed by sessions on enhancing crop resilience, gender sensitivity in project design, and the IPCC framework. Group work centred on gender mapping and barriers to project design, followed by a review of farmers' access to climate data and plant disease adaptation strategies. On Day 3, the focus shifted to prioritising agriculture and water projects for GCF. Participants worked on prioritisation exercises and group presentations, followed by roadmap discussions on stakeholder networks and next steps for the project pipeline. The workshop concluded with action planning and formal closure.

2.9 Deliverable 9: Training Workshop Report

Following the conclusion of the workshops, E Co. prepared a comprehensive deliverable summarising the organisation and delivery of two key workshops in Oman. These workshops focused on the impacts of climate change on the agriculture and water sectors, with the goal of enhancing stakeholders' capacity to access Green Climate Fund (GCF) financing and prioritise climate mitigation and adaptation actions.

The first workshop, a two-day event, provided over 40 participants with a foundational understanding of GCF access modalities, project cycles, investment criteria, and successful project case studies, while highlighting gender-sensitive approaches. The second, a three-day technical workshop, offered the same participants practical training on climate data sources, analytical tools, and strategies to address sector-specific risks, fostering the development of GCF-compliant project proposals.

Both workshops employed interactive methodologies, such as group exercises and role-playing, supported by customised training materials. These activities were designed to build lasting knowledge among stakeholders, ensuring their continued ability to contribute effectively to climate finance initiatives in Oman.

2.10 Deliverable 10: Briefs and Quizzes on Climate Change Topics

Deliverable 10 is a natural follow up to the workshops delivered as it will provide the participants with precious information helping them solidify what they learned during the 5 days of workshop, the 5 briefs cover topics that were included in the workshops and mainly the GCF investment criteria, Gender and Social inclusion, Problem tree analysis, stakeholder engagement for GCF projects and the Theory of change. The briefs are provided in both Arabic and English and could be used for both learning and also as a communication material for the launch of the knowledge management platform.

3. Lessons Learned

What Went Well:

- Communication with FAO Oman was seamless and highly accessible.
- Bi-weekly meetings were effective in keeping the project on track and resolving bottlenecks promptly.
- Stakeholder engagement was strong, contributing significantly to the success of the workshop.
- FAO provided exceptional logistical support for the workshops.
- FAO successfully coordinated the inclusion of local speakers, enriching the event with diverse perspectives and localised context for participants.
- Participants expressed satisfaction with the training delivered by E Co. Feedback from the workshop evaluations was overwhelmingly positive: 100% of trainees from the first workshop would recommend the training, while ratings for the second workshop averaged 4.4, 4.3, and 4.6 out of 5 across the three days.

Areas for Improvement:

- The length of the workshop was not adequately aligned with the number of trainers and facilitators, leading to exhaustion among the trainers.
- Time management needed improvement, particularly in ensuring participants returned promptly after breaks.
- Lectures on the first day were longer than necessary; this was addressed by Day 2 with the introduction of more group exercises and interactive activities.
- The venue had some limitations, including a beam that obstructed the view for participants seated on the left, and the presenter's table also blocked part of the slide presentation, requiring seating rearrangements.

Recommendations for Future Workshops:

- Adjust the length of the workshops to align with the number of trainers and the duration of the event. Five days proved to be too long for both trainers and participants, leading to fatigue and decreased focus, particularly on the last day of the second workshop.
- Select a venue that is fully adapted to the training needs, ensuring clear sightlines with no obstructions to the content being delivered.
- Enforce strict adherence to break and lunch times to prevent delays and loss of momentum.
- Consider shortening the sessions and ending the day earlier to maintain participant focus and engagement

4. Recommendations for the next steps

1. Establish a Formal Structure:

- The network should hold a general meeting as soon as possible.
- The primary goals of this meeting should be to:
 - Elect a steering committee that will guide the network's direction.
 - Discuss and finalise the proposed actions and activities outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR).
 - Develop a manifesto that clearly articulates the network's strategic and immediate goals.

2. Optimise Knowledge Management:

- The existing knowledge management platform should be actively maintained and regularly evaluated to ensure it is effectively serving the needs of all stakeholders.
- This platform should play a crucial role in developing a pipeline of potential projects for the country.

3. Strategic Stakeholder Engagement:

- The stakeholder engagement plan should be a living document, undergoing periodic reviews and updates as needed.
- The plan should outline concrete objectives and milestones for the network for the next two years.

4. Ongoing Training and Capacity Building:

- Continuous training programs should be offered to keep stakeholders actively engaged and informed.
- Training should encourage the generation of new project ideas and contribute to the development of the project pipeline.

5. Future Involvement:

- The network, and particularly its steering committee members, should be included in upcoming initiatives such as the December forum.
- Involving the network in the forum's planning process will give them a voice in shaping Oman's future direction and ensure ongoing stakeholder participation.

6. Additional Considerations:

- **Communication Strategy:** Develop a comprehensive communication strategy to ensure all stakeholders are informed and engaged.
- **Resource Mobilisation:** Explore potential funding sources and partnerships to support the network's activities.

- **Impact Assessment:** Establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the network's impact on project development and stakeholder engagement.