

INDEPENDENT REVIEWERS REVIEW AND REPORT ON THE THIRD BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE JORDAN FOCAL POINT (JNFP), PROJECT 5000304

REPORT REVIEW

The 3rd Biannual Report of the Jordan NFP has been reviewed and reported on in the following report.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMME STATUS IN CURRENT REPORTING PERIOD

The IRs are satisfied in principle with the overall transparency and appropriateness of the use of funds and internal systems and controls that have been established for planning, implementation and internal monitoring of decision 258. However, the managerial and technical capabilities of the PMU need to be strengthened to properly and efficiently perform their tasks and responsibilities.

Progress and expenditures of the program are in line with the project phasing plans and projected expenditures for the reporting period (with the exception of the issues listed below).

KEY ISSUES

1. **Phasing plan:** The IRs support in part the phasing plan, and in particular those funding releases and activities detailed below. However, prior to supporting the phasing plan more broadly for approval, revision would be required to provide more details and supporting information as explained in the body of this report.
2. **Financial management:**
 - The IRs have concerns about the weakness of the accounting function / system and a general lack of accounting systems within the Project Management Unit (PMU). The financial reporting shows material differences from the previous report. As a result of this weakness, the financial reporting is not sufficiently transparent to assess the appropriateness of the expenditure. The IRs are however confident that these issues can be resolved through increased capacity in PMU and recommend that a separate financial management entity to be established within the PMU apart from the one under the Ministry of Environment, with authority to manage and control all bank accounts.
 - The IRs understand that the special account should hold all the award funds less 25% withheld by the UNCC and any releases/expenditures to date. The IRs are concerned that the balance does not reconcile and that the award funds are being in two separate accounts. The IRs request a supplemental report from the NFP explaining why all funds are not in the special account and reconciling the figures.
3. **Procurement procedures:** While the procedures are generally transparent and appropriate, it might take up to 4 months to conclude a contract using the special tendering committee procedures may negatively impact the performance of the program. The IRs recommend that the NFP review the procurement procedures to see if they can be accelerated.
4. **Capacity of the JNFP:** The current capabilities and capacity of the PMU are not adequate to meet the management and oversight requirements of such a program. For example, the reviews of the actual progress reported by the implementing institutions in their reports suggest that it is slower than the progress reported in the biannual report, this raises concerns over the adequacy of the oversight being provided by the NFP particularly in the Shaumari case. The IRs recommend that NFP to strengthen its capacity in the fields of rangeland ecology, natural resources policy and planning and financial management.

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The Fodder Irrigation Project: The IRs noticed major delays in finalizing the environmental impact assessment and economic feasibility study that were requested in the last reporting cycle and are necessary to allow the IRs to provide an evaluation of the project. The study results have to be provided before the IRs can provide an assessment to the UNCC. Meanwhile, if JNFP is able to provide the outcomes of the EIA and EF studies and the fodder irrigation crop proposal in a timely manner that will allow the IRs to review and provide their evaluation before the GC session, a special report will be drafted.

REQUESTED FUNDING RELEASE

Database Information Unit (“DBIU”):

- **Requested: \$51,000**
- **Supported by IRs: \$51,000**

Community Action Plan (“CAP”):

- **Requested: \$750,000**
- **Supported by IRs: \$325,000** for revegetation activities, which can commence in the near-term following finalisation of the revegetation plan in consultation with the IRs. The remaining \$425,000 is subject to further review following the CAP preparation.

Socioeconomic incentives:

- **Requested: \$1,200,000**
- **Supported by IRs: \$0**, as the incentives will be determined by the development of the CAP, and the IRs are of the view it is too early to release funds prior to CAP preparation.

Administration:

- **Requested: \$125,000**
- **Supported by IRs: \$125,000**

Shaumari Project:

- **Requested: \$103,000**
- **Supported by IRs: \$0**, as the IRs have serious concerns about the current project plan in terms of the reasonableness of the proposed activities, as detailed in this report.

Irrigated Fodder Crops Production:

- **Requested: \$7,000,000**
- **Supported by IRs: \$0**. Until the IRs see the results of the pending studies related to this project, the IRs cannot support a release of funds for activities on this project to commence.

TOTAL REQUESTED BY JNFP:	\$9,279,000
TOTAL SUPPORTED BY IRs:	\$501,000

IR REVIEW STATEMENT

The following Independent Reviewers team members certify that the review of the NFP report is complete.

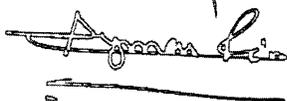
Dr. Mahmud Ayed Duwayri



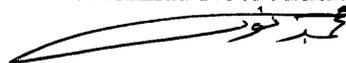
Dr. Ghassan M. Hamdallah



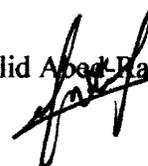
Mr. Ayman R. Al Asmar



Dr. Mohammad Noor Alhamad



Dr. Walid Abed-Rabbah



CHAPTER I: MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION BADIA RESTORATION PROJECT			
REVIEW & EVALUATION	Yes	No	Notes/Issues
A. General Management			
a. Are the management and administration structures, roles and responsibilities clearly explained for the programme?	X		a. To some extent but its needs clearer structure particularly after the PMU staff is completed.
b. Have there been any changes or updates to the programme management cycle in the last reporting period? If so are they reasonable? If not should there have been changes?	X		b. New staff joined the program but additional staff is still needed
c. Have management and administrative activities since the last reporting period been adequately explained and are reasonable and appropriate?	X		c. NFP should have better supervisory role in the following areas: Budget control; established mechanism for monitoring the Implementing Institutions work activities.
B. Procurement/Contracts	X		
a. Have the applicable Government procurement laws and regulations been provided?			
b. Are the procurement processes conducted according to the applicable laws and regulations of the Government?		X	b. The PMU did not provide evidence on how to ensure that procurement was followed the Governmental regulations especially by non governmental implementing institutes.
c. Is there a system for tracking of contracts, monitoring adherence to the conditions of the contracts?		X	c. The only system used is the Excel template which does not provide the right tool to track and monitor contracts.
d. Is there independent verification of field work conducted in accordance with contractual obligations? To ensure transparency?		X	d. Independent verification of field work was not done. Only Field visits were made by the JNFP as stated in the report.
C. Database & Information Unit	X		
a. Is the DBIU well established to respond to the need of the project?			a. As stated in the HFBD report, it seems it has been established (no visits by IR's) activities reported should

**CHAPTER I: MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION
BADIA RESTORATION PROJECT**

			provide some insight. The report did not provide evidence of the DBIU potential to respond to the project needs in terms of selection identification and delineation of range sites as well as monitoring the restoration progress using remote sensing technology. The DBIU web site contains only descriptive info on the project, the UNCC documents and the BRP documents. The site has no maps or technical data base. It looks like a website for BRP.
D. Special Issues a. Any special issues reported? b. If so, are they to be reported to the GC and is adequate detail available to do so?		X	

**CHAPTER II: GENERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
BADIA RESTORATION PROJECT**

I. REVIEW & EVALUATION	Yes	No	Notes/Issues
A. Introduction (General Financial Management) a. Are the overall figures reasonable for the reporting period and activities planned? b. Are there any items to be addressed in general? c. If so, what?	X	X	a. There was apparently a disbursement of \$ 211,864 to the Jerash Project, which is not part of award 5000304. b. In the second bi annual report, the suggested amount to be released was \$462,298 while the actual amount disbursed during this period after removing the Jerash Project Advance and Al Shumari is \$ 376,184.
B. Accounting Systems and Procedures a. Are there any changes or deviations reported? b. If so, are they adequately explained? c. Is the statement of compliance included?		X	a. The same accounting system and procedures are still used. i.e. the second bi annual report recommendations are not addressed.
		X	

**CHAPTER II: GENERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
BADIA RESTORATION PROJECT**

CHAPTER II: GENERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT BADIA RESTORATION PROJECT			
C. Procurement			
<p>a. Is the statement of application of regulations and policies included?</p>	X	<p>a. It was mentioned in the report that the governmental rules and regulations are applied .Only one page was provided representing the Special Tenders Committee mechanism of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sufficient details were provided to support the transparency in selection the specialists (Rangeland and Ecologists) by the implementing institutes. A proper announcement by the implementing institutes for vacant positions has to be followed in recruitment the needed specialists. 	
<p>b. Are there any reported changes or deviations from the applicable laws?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, are they adequately explained? ○ Are they reasonable? 	X		
<p>c. Has appropriate information been provided in regards contract tendering processes and numbers of signed contracts, etc.</p>	X	<p>c. The only information provided is the payments made to the different implementing institutions. No details about contracts signed between those institutions and third parties were provided. The Implementing Institutions should provide full details on all of their procurement processes.</p>	
<p>d. Are the overall numbers related to procurement reasonable for the implementation in program</p>	X	<p>d. The verification was not possible. The IRs can assist in reviewing the contracts when deems appropriate.</p>	
<p>e. Overall, are there sufficient controls in place to ensure transparency?</p>	X	<p>e. The only controls available are the audit bureau advance audit. i.e a modern control system including contract management is not in place.</p>	
D. Audit Systems and Procedures			
<p>a. Are external auditors in place?</p>	X	<p>a. The tender for audit was issued, offers were collected, and evaluation is made, still waiting for the final</p>	

**CHAPTER II: GENERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
BADIA RESTORATION PROJECT**

<p>b. Are there any reported changes or deviations from the applicable laws?</p> <p>c. Are recommendations being addressed adequately?</p> <p>d. Is the scope of the audits sufficient to ensure all financial aspects of the Awards are covered?</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>signature to appoint the auditor.</p> <p>b. The reported period was not audited.</p> <p>c. Based on the TOR set in the external audit section, the scope of work should cover all necessary financial aspects.</p>
<p>E. Special Account and Cash Reporting</p> <p>a. Are the beginning and ending balances reconciled with statements?</p> <p>b. Are all adjusting items sufficiently explained and documented?</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>a. The following differences were noticed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In item 3.6.1.A page 19 the total prior period expenditure is \$2,137,340 while in the second Bi Annual report the total expenditures were \$1,489,128. As explained verbally the differences are related to payments made of Water Fund Account which has to be verified and report has to be modified. ▪ Figures in item 3.1.1 A do not match figures in item 3.1.1.B. ▪ Two banks account were opened, one is under the custody of MOE in which beginning and ending balances are matched, the other one is under the custody of ministry of finance which has not been submitted yet. ▪ The cash report was not adequately presented. There is no independent verification of the total funds received and held by the PMU nor is there verification of the balances at 30 June 2010 or actual expenditures to date.
<p>F. Special Issues</p> <p>a. Any special issues reported?</p>	<p>X</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The financial schedules do not provide sufficient information on how

**CHAPTER II: GENERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
BADIA RESTORATION PROJECT**

<p>b. If so, are they to be reported to the GC and is adequate detail available to do so?</p>			<p>the amounts were spent in the implementing institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We recommend that the report has to show expenditures details starting from last report, current period, this report, budget and remaining balance. ▪ We recommend that the system has to include accrual provisions to report on obligated amounts. ▪ Amounts in item 3.6.1 A + B has to be reconciled. ▪ Amounts in item 3.6.1 A + B has to be represented after eliminating items that are not related the fund. Such as the water payments. <p>b. Financial and procurement issues were raised in the major issues section.</p>
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PROJECT 5000304: RANGELAND RESTORATION COMPONENT			
I. TECHNICAL REVIEW & EVALUATION	Yes	No	Notes/Issues
<p>1. Project Plans</p> <p>a. Is the project plan finalized? If so when was it submitted?</p> <p>b. Have there been any changes to the project plan since the last report?</p> <p>c. Are there environmental indicators/criteria that can be used to track the progress and effectiveness of restoration measures? If so are they appropriate?</p>		<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>a. The 3rd biannual report indicates that the Base Line Study is still under way. The PMU did not develop a plan for monitoring and evaluation yet. there is no mention of the availability of project final plan except the matrices on pp 29-35 in the JNFP report</p> <p>c. The indicators identified in the attached matrices are neither sufficient nor appropriate. The used indicators are mostly reports and documents. Restoration activities should have ecological indicators i.e. vegetative cover that can be tracked by remote sensing to observe the progress of restoration activities. Monitoring by remote sensing technology can be mandated to DBIU. However, in their clarifications NFP mentioned that they will develop monitoring and evaluating plan with sufficient and appropriate indicators for the CAP activities.</p>
<p>2. Phasing Plans</p> <p>a. Has phasing plan been submitted and approved by the Governing Council?</p> <p>b. If so, when?</p> <p>c. Has the Phasing Plan been modified since that time?</p> <p>d. If so, is the revised phasing plan reasonable and appropriate?</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>b. Preliminary draft report was prepared in January 2010 and submitted to the GC in April 2010. Refined phasing plan was requested.</p> <p>c. A revised phasing plan in the template provided by the Secretariat has been included in the 3rd biannual report.</p> <p>d. The phasing plan has to be developed based on the CAP plan with supporting documents.</p>

PROJECT 5000304: RANGELAND RESTORATION COMPONENT

<p>e. If not, does the phasing plan continue to be reasonable and appropriate?</p>			<p>e. Not to be refined for the next steps of the project</p>
<p>3. Project Status</p> <p>a. Have the projected activities for the current reporting period been conducted and verified? If not is there an explanation as to why?</p> <p>b. Is the sufficiency of reporting and verification appropriate and reasonable?</p> <p>c. Are the activities consistent with the submitted phasing plan?</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>a. Certain activities have been completed with a varying rate of delivery?) The plan for M&E program has not been developed yet; as there is no evidence if such program is working on the ground. Still the staff at PMU needs to be strengthened with technical staff members like a socio-economist DBIU is under implementation at this sub phase 1, while it is not included in the plan of sub phases</p> <p>b. Verification is conducted by NFP by asking the implementing institutions to submit inception report; forming thematic groups, NFP field visits/ and holding workshops/ meetings. IRs could help in the verification process. The IRs encourage the PMU to mandate the DBIU the preparing of detailed map in range sites in Badia at scale appropriate for implementing of BRP. As well as developing ecological indicators (vegetative cover) that can be tracked by satellite imagery as part of large scale monitoring of BRP according to F4 panel recommendation</p> <p>c. Review of the activities against the project plan diagram on page 26 of the 3rd NFP report, shows that achieved activities are consistent with the plan. .</p>
<p>4. Environmental Assessments</p> <p>a. Where any significant field demonstrations or assessments undertaken in the reporting period? If not should there have been? If so what was the outcome and?</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>a. So far, nothing was planned except if conducted as part of the baseline studies and thus no environmental studies were completed. Moved to technical notes. The IRs recommend that PMU finalize the establishment of M & E.</p>

PROJECT 5000304: RANGELAND RESTORATION COMPONENT

PROJECT 5000304: RANGELAND RESTORATION COMPONENT			
5. Periodic Technical Evaluation			
<p>a. Is the project being implemented in a reasonable and appropriate way? Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the plan reasonable and appropriate to achieve the purpose of the award? ▪ Is the approach (procurement procedures and outcomes...) reasonable and appropriate for implementing the project plan? Are timelines appropriate? ▪ Has new information come to light that raise questions about the approach etc? ▪ Is there adequate progress being made. <p>b. Are there any proposed changes to the project/phasing plan (e.g. modifications, adaptive management)? If so do you support these changes?</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>In general, the Project activities are progressing according to the targets and plans, except the daily small problems that need to be streamlined.</p> <p>Yes, but needs further details and updates.</p> <p>Yes, the procurement procedures need to be expedited.</p> <p>The IRs notices that deliveries of the baseline study are neither sufficient nor clear. The sampling design was weak and the IRs recommend to include in the M&E program a sampling activity to ensure that sampling will cover the selected site and cover the spatial heterogeneity at the landscape level. There are some delays in the project achieved activities which warrants PMU and IRs to work closer to streamline those difficulties. The RSCN in their 02nd progress report stated that their activities were behind the schedule.</p>
2. Projected Activities			
<p>a. Are the projected activities for the next reporting period consistent with the project/phasing plan?</p>	X		<p>Final results of Baseline Study should help to set the vision for the implementation phase of restoring the Badia ecosystem.</p> <p>The production of barley under the</p>

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II. FINANCIAL REVIEW & EVALUATION	Yes	No	Notes/Issues
<p>b. Are the project activities reasonable and appropriate?</p>	X		<p>irrigated fodder crop project will be an incentive for the livestock owners. However we need to safeguard against increasing the number of the animals beyond the Badia capacity.</p> <p>The IRs are concerned with use of micro catchments techniques in restoring the Badia ecosystem. The IRs recommend the PMU to run ecological and economical visibility study on fodder shrubs Plantation in micro catchment. The F 4 panel encourages suing proved techniques that enhance naturally the recovery of Badia vegetation with minimum human intervention.</p> <p>The road map (page 75: section on biophysical intervention) clearly stated that the intervention should focus on destocking of grazing animals and resting of grazed range. The map suggested that other interventions may include water harvesting structure and plant materials (page 76)</p>
<p>1. Periodic and Total Expenditure</p> <p>a. What were the total expenditures for this project?</p>			<p>a. During the period January – June 2010 US \$ 376,184 were paid under the different activities of the project. In addition to US \$ 211,864 that was paid as ADVANCE to Jerash Project that will be repaid back “this project is irrelevant to the restoration program”. Accordingly, since the beginning of the project, US \$ 1,815,174 was disbursed.</p>
<p>b. Is the actual expenditure consistent with the planned expenditure?</p>		X	<p>b. In the second bi annual report the amount projected to be disbursed during this period is \$ 462,298 the actual spent is \$ 376,184</p>

PROJECT 5000304: SHAUMARI COMPONENT			
I. TECHNICAL REVIEW & EVALUATION	Yes	No	Notes/Issues
<p>1. Project Plans</p> <p>a. Is the project plan finalized? If so when was it submitted?</p> <p>b. Have there been any changes to the project plan since the last report?</p> <p>c. Are there environmental indicators/criteria that can be used to track the progress and effectiveness of restoration measures? If so are they appropriate?</p>		<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>a. The only plan cited is what has been included in the 3rd biannual report which does not provide enough details.</p> <p>b. Plan is not available.</p> <p>c. As there is no plan, accordingly there are no indicators and or criteria</p>
<p>2. Phasing Plans</p> <p>a. Has phasing plan been submitted and approved by the Governing Council?</p> <p>b. If so, when?</p> <p>c. Has the Phasing Plan been modified since that time?</p> <p>d. If so, is the revised phasing plan reasonable and appropriate?</p> <p>e. If not, does the phasing plan continue to be reasonable and appropriate?</p>	X		<p>The phasing plan is not clear which means that the only Project Phasing plan that we are familiar with is the “Diagram” on page 27 of the 3rd Report, which is an overall scheme to the Project. It lacks “Bar Schedules; Timeframes, budget ceilings, and detailed outputs and activities. More details on the responsibilities, TORs, indicators are needed.</p>
<p>3. Project Status</p> <p>a. Have the projected activities for the current reporting period been conducted and verified? If not is there an explanation as to why?</p> <p>b. Is the sufficiency of reporting and verification appropriate and reasonable?</p> <p>c. Are the activities consistent with the submitted phasing plan?</p>		<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>a. The part of 3rd biannual report on Shaumari project activities and achievements needs to be presented in some more details.</p> <p>b. The report is very brief and incomplete. It should clearly state the minimum viable populations for both Oryx and Gazelle in the Reserve. Reporting on the fence is ambiguous.</p> <p>c. The information on fencing activities is absent.</p>
<p>4. Environmental Assessments</p> <p>a. Where any significant field demonstrations or assessments undertaken in the reporting period?</p> <p>b. If not should there have been?</p>		<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>a. There was no field assessment.</p> <p>b. It is needed to ensure the success of the captive breeding program . It will also help determine the effect of</p>

PROJECT 5000304: SHAUMARI COMPONENT

<p>c. If so what was the outcome and ...?</p>			<p>management on vegetation (i.e determine the percentage of actual utilization; overgrazed , under grazed)</p>
<p>5. Periodic Technical Evaluation</p> <p>a. Is the project being implemented in a reasonable and appropriate way? Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the plan reasonable and appropriate to achieve the purpose of the award? ▪ Is the approach (procurement procedures and outcomes...) reasonable and appropriate for implementing the project plan? Are timelines appropriate? ▪ Has new information come to light that raise questions about the approach etc? ▪ Is there adequate progress being made. <p>b. Are there any proposed changes to the project/phasing plan (e.g. modifications, adaptive management)? If so do you support these changes?</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out Carrying capacity (CC) is not sufficient to draw conclusions about the minimum size to maintain viable Oryx and Gazlle populations. • It's not appropriate to draw final conclusion on CC from results obtained in one year. Approach used to calculate the CC should be assessed and verified on the ground • The work on the minimum viable population for Oryx and Gazelle was not done yet. There is difference between the carrying capacity concept and the minimum viable population. Such misunderstanding of basic concepts in wildlife management raises serious questions on the potential to implement Shaumari project. • The length of the actually replaced fence is not clear. The total perimeter of the fenced area as reported is not correct (180000 m). <p>b. Safari vehicle is not in consistency with F4 Panel recommendations. The Safari vehicle can be purchased in light of available funds from different sources and upon assessment of its effect on the Reserve ecosystem.</p>
<p>6. Projected Activities</p> <p>a. Are the projected activities for the next reporting period consistent with the project/phasing plan?</p> <p>b. Are the projected activities reasonable and appropriate?</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>a. Spending US \$ 80 000 on Safari Vehicles is not appropriate at this stage in view of other more important activities.</p> <p>b. The IRs recommend that field visit can be arranged to Shaumari project to</p>

PROJECT 5000304: SHAUMARI COMPONENT			
			thoroughly investigate its accomplished activities (i.e the length of the actually replaced fence and the cost of replacement, number of introduced Gazelle, etc)
II. FINANCIAL REVIEW & EVALUATION	Yes	No	Notes/Issues
1. Periodic and Total Expenditure <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What were the total expenditures for this project? b. Is the actual expenditure consistent with the planned expenditure? 			a. The total expenditure of the project is not provided. Total cash release for this project is \$ 148,576 b. Information is not available.
2. Periodic Financial Review <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are project expenditures appropriate in the context of the project as a whole? b. Are expenditures reasonable based on the progress achieved in the reporting period? c. Are expenditures and obligations transparent and based on established policy as reported by the NFP? d. Are any deviations reported from established policies and if so, are they justified? e. Is there a request for release of funds? Is the request appropriate and reasonable? 	X	X	a. sufficient information is not available. b. Not available c. Not available d. Not Available e. It is not appropriate.
III. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	Yes	No	Notes/Issues
1. Are there any significant issues/problems that you would like to bring to the attention of the Governing Council?	X		1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The priorities of Shaumari project should focus on fence replacement and Captive breeding program including expanding the carrying capacity study to cover the entire Shaumari Reserve and finding the minimum viable population of Oryx and Gazalle. IRs recommend the allocation of the budget of the safari vehicles to fence replacement. • The overall planning and detailed planning need major review, accordingly the M&E and impact

PROJECT 5000304: SHAUMARI COMPONENT

2. Does the Council need to authorize the release of funds?	X	assessment system are required 2. Funds should be released after the proposed phasing plan is revised to meet the objective of Shaumari project and IRs recommendations
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