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| UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMEBDP/EEG - MISSION REPORT SUMMARY Date: 12 July 2012 | | | | UNDP_Logo-Blue w TaglineBlue-ENG.png |
| Name Aki Kono, UN-REDD/GEF EBD  Ben Vickers, UN-REDD/FAO Regional Centre | | | |
| **Approved Mission Itinerary:**  Bangkok – Colombo – Bangkok | | **List of Annexes**:  n/a | | |
| Inclusive Travel Dates: | | **Key counterpart(s) in each location:** | | |
| 31 Jan – 1 Feb, 2013 |  | Location: Colombo, Sri Lanka   * Anura Sathurusinghe, Conservator of Forests, Dep of Forest, MoE * Enrico Gaveglia, UNDP CO DCD-Operations * Patrick Evans, FAO Country Representative * Ananda Mallawatantri, UNDP CO ARR * Nalin Munasinghe, FAO CO Officer * Anna Giovannini, UNV for UN-REDD * Premalal Kuruppuarachchi, FAO CO Officer * Santha Baminiwatte, FAO National Consultant | | |
| **Purpose/Objectives of Mission**  The purpose of this short mission was to assist the country team with steps towards inception, including the finalization of ToRs for the PMU staff and initiation of activity planning for the NP implementation, at least for the first quarter, in order to ensure quick and smooth transition from the inception phase into the implementation of technical activities. | | | | |
| **Context**  The submission deadline for the SL NP to the PB was successfully met in March. The time between the NP approval and NPD signature took a little more than the standard six-month revision timeframe. Initially, the delay was going to be less than a month; therefore, the NPD was expected to be cleared for signature and signed by the end of October. However, it took additional two months due to reasons, including the slow turnaround by the UN agencies in a review process as a result of the busy period for the PB and CoP in Doha, as well as the time took to clarify HACT arrangements with FAO and UNEP.  Although the MoE signed the NPD in December, the UN agency signatures have not yet been secured since it coincided with the year-end holiday season. For UNDP CO, it was a requirement to go through LPAC and ESSP before a DoA was released. However, this process was slightly misunderstood initially by the CO, and the NPD was signed by the UNDP without the DoA. The mistake was quickly recognized as soon as it was explained that for a joint programme such as UN-REDD+, the NPD is the official document for all three agencies. The Government and FAO have been very understanding of this and agreed to redo the signing process.  Meanwhile, on the technical front, the National Programme Director and the country team (FAO and UNDP) have begun their preparation for the inception phase, including the recruitment of the PMU and formal appointment of the RPMCC members, programme budget and activity planning. | | | | |
| **Summary of Mission Activities/ Findings**  This short mission to Colombo was conducted jointly with Ben Vickers, FAO to assist the country team iron out a number of administrative and inception planning related issues. The country team expressed their appreciation and the usefulness of this type of mission.  **Key issues discussed:**   * Finalization of the NPD signature process and PMU recruitment; * Clearance and approval processes with the External Resources Division, Department of National Planning, and fund transfer arrangements with the Treasury Department (particularly in the context of HACT); * Actions and timelines to be taken between now and inception and to move beyond inception quickly and smoothly; * Strategic coordination among relevant forest and climate change initiatives (GEF and other bilaterally funded projects) of FAO and UNDP in the country to cost-effectively achieve strategic outcomes; and * Additional staffing to ensure well-coordinated and timely implementation of UNDP-led activities of the NP (Anna is finishing her UNV contract in March).   **Discussions and Key Action Points (details provided in Annex 1):**   * PMU staff and CTA ToRs are finalized and will be advertised as soon as possible once cleared by the National Planning Department. * NPD signature process will be completed by early February, and key sections will be translated. * Government will check with the Treasury Department on how HACT can be effectively supported from the government side in the context of this joint programme. * RPMCC will be established in April. * FAO and UNDP COs will establish a joint office where all relevant NRM, forest and climate change related projects/programmes will be housed together to increase coordination and collaboration among related initiatives and to reduce unnecessary costs and duplication of work. * The country team will already start with the communication work – produce basic materials for awareness-raising and look into the establishment of a national REDD+ website. * Inception workshop is planned for early May. * Activity ToRs will be developed by FAO and UNDP to help ensure smooth and quick transition into the NP implementation.   Following timeline of activities up to inception workshop was agreed:   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Week | Feb 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Mar 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Apr 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | May 1 | 2 | | NPD submit to Sec |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | NPD submit to ERD |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | PMU staff recruit |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Office location and utilities |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Open FD bank account |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Transfer of funds to UN agencies |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Inception workshop  invitations |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | RPMCC meeting |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Internal staff workshop |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | Inception workshop |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | PEB meeting |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | | | | |
| Follow up actions:  * Work with the UNDP CO to complete the NPD signature process * Support the UNDP CO in preparing TOR for a national specialist to coordinate UNDP-led activities * Work with Anna to prepare a general work flow and scope of work for key UNDP-led activities for first three months of the NP implementation, which can then be considered by the PMU to help speed up the start-up phase. FAO is also doing the same for their activities. | | | **Distribution List:**   * Tim Clairs, UN-REDD UNDP PTA * Tim Boyle, UN-REDD AP * Clea Paz, UN-REDD Secretariat * Ananda Mallawatantri, UNDP CO ARR * Thomas Enters, UNEP | |

### Annex One

Planning meetings minutes:

### Finalisation of PMU ToRs:

The latest versions of the PMU ToRs are from 12th December 2012, incorporating Ben’s amendments. The ToRs of the four junior posts (Communications Officer, Admin Assistant, Financial Assistant and Secretary) need no further amendment. The ToR for the Programme Manager (PM) should incorporate a short explanation of the relationship of the PMU to other key institutions in the REDD+ Roadmap management structure, including Task Forces (TFs) and Technical Working Groups (TWGs). The ToRs for both the PM and the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) should clarify that the latter has an advisory role to the former, not a supervisory role. The CTA ToR needs to be amended to reflect the decision that it is a part-time international post.

***Action:*** *ToRs for the PM and CTA were finalized after the meeting and are now also ready for advertising.*

### Recruitment process for PMU staff:

The recruitment of the MRV expert is near completion. Interviews were conducted in November. The interview panel’s recommendations must be verified by an internal FAO selection panel before formal offer can be made to the successful candidate. The interview process did not involve the government counterpart or the FAO country office. This should be rectified for the CTA and PMU staff interview processes. UNDP may also require an international staff member to work on the UN-REDD Programme, either at JPO level or through UNV.

***Action:*** *Ben to provide a summary of the process to date to Patrick, who will follow up with FAO HQ for update on progress.*

***Action:*** *Ananda to investigate options for JPO/UNV recruitment.*

With respect to recruitment of national staff for PMU, the recent government circular on project management defined salaries and qualifications for positions. It also requires agencies which have signed agreements with the government on national project execution (including UNDP) to recruit staff through the External Resources Division (ERD). This process would take at least three months from the date of announcement to the start of work. FAO has not signed a national execution agreement and can speed up the recruitment process by up to a month. Approval of the NPD is the only precondition for PMU staff recruitment. We will therefore advertise and recruit national PMU staff directly through the FAO country office. Recruitment announcement will be made within the week of 4-8th Feb, allow three weeks for application and conduct interviews during March. Anura will sit on the interview panel for all positions. Aim to have all staff in position within the first two weeks of April.

***Action:*** *Anura to confirm recruitment plans in a meeting with salaries commission of the National Planning Department (NPD) on Wednesday 6th Feb.*

***Action:*** *Nalin to arrange publication of five ToRs (excluding CTA) in national press after confirmation received from Anura – by Friday 8th Feb.*

CTA recruitment must be done through the FAO regional office in Bangkok, because the Sri Lanka office is not yet connected to the new internal online administrative system (GRMS). Aki and Ben have canvassed interest among several international experts, but the recruitment will be through open competition.

***Action:*** *Ben to determine the recruitment process in consultation with FAO RAP Operations staff and arrange for announcement within the week of 11-15th Feb. Aki and Ben to notify key potential candidates of the announcement.*

### National Programme Document (NPD) submission:

Signature process must be restarted, otherwise the current hard copy would show a discrepancy between the dates of signatures. Five hard copies of the NPD must be signed by government and the three UN Organisations and submitted to the UN-REDD Secretariat, so the current signed document, with no copies, is in any case insufficient.

UNDP approval of the NPD was subject to a multi-stakeholder meeting which was carried out on 30th January. All parties are now cleared to sign.

Action: Within the day of this meeting (1st Feb), UNEP signature was obtained electronically from Nairobi, UNDP and FAO country offices signed, government signature was obtained.

***Action:*** *Nalin to forward five signed hard copies to UNRC for signature and arrange courier to Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) within the week of 4-8th Feb.*

### National NPD approval:

The National Programme Document (NPD) must be approved by the National Planning Department (NPD) before funds can be released. This approval process was delayed due to a change at Secretary level within the NPD. Anura has received assurances from the NPD, acknowledging that they are to blame for the delay, and promising to complete the approval within two weeks. Anura is confident that the process can in fact be completed by 8th Feb. Verbal approval has already been given, but formal approval is required before funds can be spent. However, this should not delay the initiation of the staff recruitment process or PMU office selection, as the approval will have been obtained by the time any expenditure is due.

***Action:*** *Anura to obtain confirmation, in writing, of no objection to initiation of PMU staff recruitment at NPD meeting on 6th Feb, and notify all of NPD approval when received.*

All international assistance must be approved and signed formally by the ERD before implementation can begin and before international staff can receive their visas. This approval would usually be done separately by each UN organization for their respective components, but there is no reason why it cannot be done jointly. It could be obtained by adding ERD to the signature list for the NPD submission to MPTF. However, there is a risk that this might delay the process unnecessarily. Instead, a second document will be generated, after the current submission process has been completed. This will be an exact copy of the NPD, with the signature page replaced. This document will be signed by UNDP country office (on behalf of all three UN Organisations), Ministry of Environment and ERD.

***Action:*** *Nalin to create new document during week of 11-15th Feb and circulate for signature to UNDP, MoE and ERD.*

### Creation of UN-REDD Programme bank account:

By the time the MPTF releases funds for the programme to the UN Organizations, on receipt of the signed NPD, the FD should have an account in place to receive the funds from all three Organizations. Anura has initiated enquiries on the setting up of a dedicated bank account. However, UNDP has to send money through the Treasury, not directly to the FD account. Furthermore, according to government auditors, FD should open up three separate accounts to receive funds from each agency. It is unlikely that the Treasury would allow this. The most suitable way forward would be to open a single account, but maintain three separate ledgers. Justification for this course of action would need to be prepared in anticipation of comments from government auditors. HACT allows this approach, according to the relevant paragraphs in the governance section of the NPD. The PMU would submit quarterly work plans, on the basis of which each agency could transfer advance payments to the FD account (except for procurement or contracting, in the case of FAO).

***Action:*** *Anura to request approval from Treasury on the set up of a single account with three ledgers. Proceed with opening of account on the basis of this advice (to be completed within February)*

***Action:*** *Ananda to ask government auditors for clarity on this issue and prepare a justification accordingly.*

### RPMCC meeting:

Anura has drawn up a list of names for the national REDD+ Programme Management Coordination Committee (RPMCC) in accordance with the R-PP. These names have been forwarded to the Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, who approved the list. However, the body has yet to meet. The inaugural meeting should be in the form of a general awareness-raising event for the members of the body, to be held before the inception workshop. The RPMCC meeting should also endorse the ToRs of the five Task Forces (TFs) named in the R-PP, including that of the MRV TF, which has already been established. The four other TFs will be established after the inception workshop.

***Action:*** *Anura to organize the inaugural RPMCC meeting within April. Ben to provide support for preparation of agenda and materials as required.*

### PMU premises and utilities:

It is agreed that the PMU should be located as near to the FD as possible. PMU premises were initially envisaged as partly co-financed by the government, but there is no suitable space available within the FD itself and no co-finance has been budgeted by the FD for 2013. From next year about 40 million rupees over 3 years will be requested from FD budget.

For this year, we will have to cover rent and utilities from programme funds. About 150,000 rupees per month have been allocated.

It is proposed that UN-REDD PMU staff will share premises with staff of the AusAID-funded Community Forestry project, implemented by UNDP and FD, and with the FAO/UNDP joint GEF4 Biomass for Energy project. This will increase synergy and coordination between these related initiatives.

***Action:*** *Ananda to draw up proposals for cost-sharing agreements between these three projects.*

The AusAID CF project already has an office in FD and does not have funds available for office rental. Co-finance for office rent and utilities will be secured from the GEF4 project, which is due to begin implementation by May.

In selection of premises for PMU, we must therefore look for sufficient office space for multiple project staff. We will also look for premises including large rooms that may be serve as location for workshops and meetings. This will bring cost savings for such activities, as currently envisaged in the programme budget.

The premises should be secured, along will necessary utilities and office equipment/materials, by 1st April, in order to accommodate PMU staff as soon as they start work.

***Action:*** *Anura and Nalin to lead process of securing office premises, to be completed by 1st April. Nalin to secure utilities and office equipment by the same date.*

UNDP and FAO can both provide vehicles for programme use from their existing resources. A driver will be included as an additional staff member in the PMU recruitment process, also to carry out general office support duties.

***Action:*** *Nalin to draw up a ToR for driver/support staff and add to ToRs for ongoing recruitment process.*

PMU will also require key of software packages e.g. ArcInfo, ArcGIS and other information resources e.g. satellite imagery. This has been included in the programme budget.

***Action:*** *Nalin to consult with Matieu on software requirements for PMU.*

### Communications:

FD has already developed some brochures on REDD+, but has not printed. Some basic information on REDD+, UN-REDD and the progress in Sri Lanka to date, should be prepared prior to the inception workshop. All communication materials and key documents should be produced in English, Sinhalese and Tamil.

***Action:*** *Aki to send UN-REDD communications guidance to Nalin. Nalin to draft text for an information note and circulate for review.*

***Action:*** *Nalin to arrange translation of NPD Executive Summary and Results Framework into Sinhalese and Tamil*

The Communications Officer will be paid by UNEP. However, UNEP cannot transfer funds to FAO to effect payment in country because this would result in ‘double dipping’. The FD may have some resources available to produce these materials prior to the inception workshop. Additional resources may be required from UNEP’s part of the programme budget.

***Action:*** *Nalin to write to Thomas to work out financial arrangements for Communications Officer without double dipping, and for any potential communications expenditure prior to the inception workshop.*

### Inception workshop preparation:

UNDP has prepared a guidelines document for the sequence of activities leading up to and including the inception workshop. This includes a suggested agenda for a 2-day event. All PMU staff, including CTA, must be in place before the inception workshop. In order to give some time for the staff to prepare for the workshop, we should aim for a date in early May, tentatively the week of 6-10th May (*Note: a separate workshop on REDD+ is being organized on 3rd May in Kandy – Anura to provide more details*).

An internal workshop for the staff should be organized first, at which the team outlines the annual work plan, including procurement and recruitment plans.

The public inception workshop will take stock of what has happened since the validation workshop in January 2012, including any new projects and initiatives in the country, and will adjust the results framework taking these into account. There may accordingly be some reshuffling of the roles and responsibilities of the three UN Organisations at the level of outputs and activities (changes at outcome level would require approval of the UN-REDD Policy Board), as long as overall budget splits remain unchanged. On the first day of the inception workshop, participants should examine all programme outputs and activities and agree on necessary adjustments. The second day will concentrate on validation of the work plan, risk management, M&E and reporting requirements.

The initial Programme Executive Board (PEB) meeting will be held after the workshop, chaired by UNRC and co-chaired by Secretary of the Ministry of Environment. This meeting will approve the first year budget and work plan.

***Action:*** *Aki to provide Nalin with inception guidelines for UN-REDD.*

***Action:*** *Anura to confirm a date for the inception workshop with MoE and FD by 1st March, and arrange for invitations to be sent by the appropriate government body before the New Year.*

### Activity ToRs:

Shanta has developed ToRs for 36 activities under outcomes 3 and 4 (FAO-supported outcomes). These ToRs have been reviewed by Matieu and describe the work that must be carried out by national or international consultants, and cost estimates for this work.

A similar exercise could be carried out for all activities under the other outcomes, but such a comprehensive job is not currently possible because UNDP and UNEP do not have the resources to do this. However, there are some activities under the UNDP-supported areas which, like much of FAO’s technical work, can be based on standard ToRs developed for other countries or programmes. Such standard ToRs would include activities such as capacity assessments and political economy analysis etc.

It would also be desirable for ToRs to be developed for all activities that are likely to be undertaken within the first six months of the programme. This would be extremely valuable in assisting the PMU staff to develop the work plan for the first year at their internal workshop. However, ToRs for activities envisaged for later implementation should not be developed at this stage, because of the likelihood that some activities will change depending on early progress and national circumstances.

All ToRs developed at this stage are provisional and will be reviewed by the PMU staff. The level of detail provided by Shanta, in terms of cost estimates, is the most that should be done. Further elaboration of budget requirements, and allocation of implementation responsibilities to staff or consultants, will be done at the initial PMU workshop.

***Action:*** *Aki to send Anna the standard ToRs available for key UNDP-supported activities. Anna to identify activities under outcomes 1, 2 and 5 likely to be implemented early on in the programme and develop ToRs for these, with the advice of Shanta.*

### Utilising Shanta and Anna:

Shanta’s consultancy contract expires on 15th March. Anna’s contract expires on 1st April, but she will be unavailable after 18th March. It is therefore important that we use both of them as effectively as possible in the lead up to the inception workshop.

Shanta has prepared a draft of the MRV Action Plan. It has been sent to Matieu for standard formatting. The draft should be circulated among the members of the MRV Task Force ahead of their third meeting on 6th Feb, when it can be finalized.

Shanta has conducted a capacity assessment of institutions which will be involved in activities under outcomes 3 and 4. Matieu has suggested that this exercise be expanded to encompass the work carried out by the consultant in Bangladesh, but this may not be possible within Shanta’s timeframe. It is also important that this work does not overlap with the general national capacity assessment for REDD+ that will be conducted with UNDP support under output 2.2 shortly after programme inception.

***Action:*** *Ben to clarify with Matieu on the scope of capacity assessment to be conducted by Shanta.*

Shanta estimates that it will take another four weeks to complete the data catalogue for GHG inventory. There has been a slight delay in this work because the response from some partners to the capacity analysis exercise was late.

Anna has worked on the redesign of the programme budget to conform to the new budget categories determined by the MPTF. This has not yet been done for the FAO components.

***Action:*** *Nalin to work with Anna and Ramitha to adjust FAO outputs into new budget categories.*

***Action:*** *Anna to work with Anura on press releases and awareness-raising materials ahead of the inception workshop.*