

**GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA – UNITED NATIONS
PROGRAMME OPERATIONAL PLAN (2012 – 2014)**

**HEALTH AND HIV CCG
PROGRESS REVIEW, QUARTER 1 & 2: JANUARY - AUGUST 2012**

CCG CO-CHAIRS:

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1. STAKEHOLDERS

The National AIDS Coordinating Agency is the primary IP for the HIV Portfolio. Peripheral stakeholders that working with NACA include; Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of State President (Department of Public Service Management); Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs (Department of women's Affairs); Ministry of Local Government (Department of Social Services) and the Botswana Business Coalition on AIDS).

2. DISBURSEMENTS AND EXPENDITURES

The 2012 budget for the CCG is being consolidated. Therefore, the proportion of UNDP'S contribution to the total budget is difficult to ascertain. However, the 2012 budget for the UNDP HIV Portfolio amounts to US\$1, 700, 000.00. Participating agencies in the Health and HIV CCG include; UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS and UNHCR. As at the end of quarter 2, beginning of Quarter 3 (as at August 14, 2012) de livery against the portfolio budget was as follows:

	Budget (US\$)	Disbursements	Expenditure	Delivery (%)
Total for the CCG	-	-	-	-
UNDP	1,700,000	1,340,000.00	817,991.30	48%

The current delivery rate as at 14 August 2012 stands at 48% as reflected in the table above. The outstanding NEX Advance with the IP is \$521, 999.85 made out of advances for the 3rd quarter and balances from the previous quarters which have been re-authorized for use as part of the 3rd quarter. Progress for many of the stakeholders implementing the project with NACA is fairly good. Implementation challenges entail difficulties in synergizing programming efforts of participating agencies to work with implementing partners on various aspects of the programme. Planning challenges further constrain implementation efforts and compromise the quality of the programme. Therefore, the CCG is revisiting its planning modalities and all components are re-aligning their activities to harmonize the group's efforts into a consolidated programme. Furthermore, delivery progress is not usually and clearly based on utilisation of resources, despite anecdotal evidence that the outputs delivery is not satisfactory. This results in budget inconsistencies and lack of verification for budget tracking for the CCG in its oversight role.

3. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

Against the backdrop of the challenges faced by the CCG, several achievements have been gained as follows;

- a) *Re-strategizing planning:* The CCG has seen benefits from its hard work on re-envisioning its planning processes. To this end UN participating agencies have begun exploring areas of joint planning and several areas have been identified. Agencies are currently engaging partners and restructuring activities in line with the Annual Work Plan to harmonize processes. In the bid to do so, the CCG has also recognized the importance to re-focus activities in tandem with shifts in the national development priorities.
- b) *Adherence to oversight standards:* The CCG is striving to ensure adherence to oversight standards and with regards to this intention, meetings have been convened for the past two quarters of the year, 2012. Participation of implementing partners in CCG activities has been promising in the last two quarters despite, lack of representation of several key stakeholders and the delegation of personnel with inadequate authority to proffer influential decisions to reposition the programme. The co-chairpersonship between the

UN and the government of Botswana functions well with the duo complementing each other in discussing implementation issues.

- c) *Deliberate efforts to improve programme quality assurance:* The CCG has made significant strides to refocus efforts towards improving the quality of activities. Support has been offered to merge and consolidate several disjointed activities within various portfolios. To enhance this function, the CCG is working at coming up with new ways of extending the guidelines provided through the GoB-UN POP by ensuring that appropriate steps to distinguish programme activities are taken during planning.
- d) *Capacity Building:* In an effort to improve performance, some implementing partners have been trained on several aspects relevant to project management including; programme management and reporting, Results based Management, the Harmonised Approaches to Cash Transfers as well as on specific subject areas such as updates on HIV.

4. MAIN CHALLENGES

- a) *Delivering as One:* The UN agencies in the CCG are fraught with challenges of delivering as one. Despite the fact that all the agencies plan their activities from the common GoB-UN POP, difficulties are encountered in harmonizing efforts to collectively channel activities towards central common outputs. This has resulted in the plan to be rather implemented in a haphazard manner. Consequently, the quality of the programme activities is diminished. The fragmented approach impinges on implementation processes negatively, for example reporting by an IP to different UN agencies on overlapping activities proves cumbersome.
- b) *Programme monitoring constraints:* The lack of expenditure based progress reviewing processes makes it difficult to ascertain the delivery rate of the CCG vis-a-vis allocated funds. This factor inversely affects efforts to improve programme planning and implementation. In addition, the CCG is facing challenges to improve the quality of its progress reports.
- c) *Programme Management constraints:* Several factors are being observed to impede the successful implementation of the programme component. Among them are; compromised capacity of officers, both from the UN and IP sides - most Programme Officers appear to be inadequately prepared in project management skills;

issues of accountability on project execution – laxity of the requirement to assure quality of the programme by the UN officers and difficulty to integrate programme activities in mainstream government plans for full oversight by existing structures on the part of government; and difficulty by the CCGs to land on an effective strategic direction for the programme.

- d) *Bureaucratic processes:* Procurement processes both in government and within the UN agencies is lamented to be attributable to many process delays that hinder implementation progress. Release of funds, particularly at the beginning of the financial year is a clear illustration of these constraints for many UN and government departments. This is compounded by the non-aligned UN and government financial years.

5. CCG MEETINGS

The CCG has to find a workable approach to communicating meetings to enhance participation. At the moment this happens in a non-regularized manner. The meetings are convened on a quarterly basis with lapses in the interval. The last quarterly meeting is used for progress review of the previous quarter and planning for the following year.

6. CONCLUSION

Health and HIV remain to be crucial national development priorities. Health, as an underlying factor that determines the potency to do well in many other development areas, requires to be viewed in cognizance of other UN operations. This has implications for joint programming between the UN agencies within the component group as well as across the UN units. Such efforts will enhance programme planning, implementation and, monitoring and evaluation.