**Meeting Minutes from Inception Workshop on ‘Implementing urgent adaptation priorities through strengthened decentralised and national development plans (ADAPT PLAN).’**

**Golden Peacock Hotel, Lilongwe, Malawi, 18th and 19th May 2015**

1. **Members Present**

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1. **Introduction**

This Inception Workshop for the ‘Implementing urgent adaptation priorities through strengthened decentralised and national development plans (ADAPT PLAN)’ project, was held on 18th and 19th May 2015 at Golden Peacock Hotel in Lilongwe. The formal launch of the project among key stakeholders in Malawi occurred on the first day, the 18th May, preceded over by the Principal Secretary from the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, Dr. Ntupanyama. As well as the formal launch, the Inception Workshop also included training on UNDP-GEF financial, procurement, monitoring and evaluation reporting, and allocated time for initiating work on the project’s first annual work-plans to plan for implementation of the project.

1. **Opening Remarks**

The Principal Secretary for Environment and Climate Change Management, Dr. Yanira Ntupanyama, opened the Inception Workshop which was held jointly with the National Dialogue on the Global Environment Facility. She noted and praised the high numbers of government officials from the districts that were in attendance for the ADAPT PLAN project, which displayed their commitment, and acknowledged that there was need for further representation from Central level Ministries. She commended Malawi on mobilizing more resources during the GEF 5 cycle than any other least developed country, and expressed her hope that the project would be implemented well and achieve good results.

Dr. Henry Sibanda, UNDP Technical Advisor on the SLM Programme, provided remarks on behalf of Ms. Carol Flore-Smereczniak, the Deputy Resident Representative for Programmes. Dr. Sibanda noted that currently in Malawi, not enough work is done to monitor interventions in climate change and resilience building. Dr. Sibanda noted that the project is unique in a number of ways, in that it will invest in improving the overall government system, building the institutional framework to incentivize adaptation planning through the creation of climate adaptation indicators at national and local level, thereby enabling implementation of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II. Furthermore, he noted that for the very first time in Malawi, this project will develop a system to collect data for M&E at district level, to inform district level planning. Both speakers welcomed participants to the workshop and expressed their hope that proceedings, discussions and decisions would be fruitful.

1. **Proceedings**

Following the official launch of the Inception Workshop, project teams reconvened in a separate room to receive training on UNDP-GEF Procedures, and work exclusively on formulation of their 2015 work plans for the remainder of the workshop. Presentations provided to the Project Teams included the following:

1. Background to ADAPT PLAN Project, including objectives, goal, outcomes, outputs and budgets
2. Results and Resources Framework for the Project
3. Annual Work Planning
4. UNDP Financial Reporting procedures
5. UNDP-GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures
6. UNDP Procurement Procedures
7. **Discussions on the presentations presented**

Comments and questions were provided on the presentations from the project team. On funding support it was clarified that resources under outcome 2, will be used to support implementation of the Community Adaptation Plans developed under outcome 1. Clarifications were also sought on the transferring of funds. It was clarified that funds would be disbursed provided financial reports were submitted on time and funds depleted, a further request could then be submitted and approval for the next tranche. This would be done per district basis, so work in one district will not be delayed due to failure to submit reports from another district. It was also clarified that the Harmonized DSA Guidelines are the ones to be used for calculation of allowances. On procurement issues, districts expressed their concern with the lengthy time it may take. It was explained that to avoid delay, planning of procurement should start as soon as possible, for hiring of consultants and procurement of equipment, keeping to timelines for example related to development and finalization of Terms of Reference and advertising.

1. **Presentations of Draft Annual Work Plans**

Following presentation on UNDP-GEF procedures, time was allocated to allow the project team and in particular the three district teams from Nkhata Bay, Zomba and Ntcheu to begin discussing and drafting their 2015 work plans. The three districts then presented their draft work plans to the group to ensure activities presented were on track and matched with the project document and contributed towards achievement of project outputs and outcomes.

**Ntcheu**

From their initial discussions and draft work plan, Ntcheu noted that for 2015 their priority was to ensure capacity building of extension workers and communities on climate change adaptation was initiated. The team also planned activities to ensure stakeholders understood their roles and responsibilities within the project and train communities on a number of risk resilient livelihood areas, including agroforestry and soil and water conservation technologies.

**Zomba**

Zomba plan to hold a number of sensitization meetings in the catchment areas, providing briefings to the district level structures and the District Executive Committee, as well as community structure trainings through the Area Executive Committees. They also plan to have a number of trainings for the community on risk resilient interventions.

**Nkhata Bay**

Nkhata Bay had a focus on the opening of a bank account for the project as well as setting up office space. They also noted the need to conduct a number of sensitization meetings with DEC and the Full Council, as well as frontline staff. Another key activity noted for this year was the identification of beneficiaries from the project.

It was noted that districts were on the right track to developing their work plans, and as such they were given until Tuesday 26th May to submit their final versions, allowing them one week to finalize and ensure activities and corresponding budgets were realistic. It was also agreed that a more in depth training would be organized when the Project Manager is recruited, especially on UNDP financial procedures, providing a more practical element to enhance understanding of the procedures involved in project implementation and to avoid delays.

1. **Closing Remarks**

Closing remarks were provided by Mr Makonombera, Assistant Director of Environmental Affairs Department, who again commended the large turnout from the project teams and the commitment shown for this project, especially from the districts of Ntcheu, Nkhata Bay and Zomba. He noted that this project was unique as it aimed to address the real issues in the districts, and encouraged the teams to maximize on the training provided that has been provided. He thanked UNDP and GEF for the provision of resources for this project and encouraged project teams to submit reports on time without any delay to ensure project gets off to a good start.