

Project Executive Board Meeting
6 April 2011
Centre for Constitutional Dialogue (CCD)

Present

Executive Robert Piper, UNDP Resident Representative

Sr. Beneficiary

Manohar P Bhattarai, Secretary General, Constituent Assembly
Netra Timsina, President, NGO Federation

Project Assurance

Kalpana Sarkar, Programme Officer, Governance Unit/UNDP

Project Manager

Rohan Edrisinha, International Project Manager, SPCBN

Others Present

Jorn Sorensen, Deputy Country Director, UNDP
Dag Nagoda, Norwegian Embassy
Krishna Khanal, CCD Director
Lars P Christensen, Programme Coordinator, DANIDA HUGOU

- The main agenda of the meeting was to discuss the impact and achievements from the first quarter of 2011, as well as review and endorse the second quarter plan and annual work plan for 2011.
- Robert Piper, Chair of Project Board meeting opened the meeting by stating that the last few months were very exciting and it is going to be more challenging ahead as it is not sure if the draft constitution will be ready by 28 May 2011. He requested the Board to understand that the project is working in an unpredictable environment and that the Board help to ensure that the constitution-making process is their priority. Even though there are other related issues, like the future status of the CCD, the major project priority at the present should be drafting the constitution which is unfinished and that is where most of our effort should be placed at this time.

- RP also emphasized that with the guidance of Mr. Rohan Edrisinha and Prof. Krishna Khanal, the CCD is best placed to conduct more of the required dialogue facilitation and negotiation that is essential for decisions to be reached on the final constitution. This project priority was established at the last board meeting and has been implemented over the past quarter.
- In addition, the Chair also explained to the PEB members that senior national staff have been selected to replace three of the SPCBN international staff who have departed during the first quarter. This change has reduced costs and staffing within the project, as committed in the previous December 2010 Project Board meeting.
- It was also noted that after the close of the second quarter (June 2011), the project will have less than one hundred thousand dollars remaining in its 2011 budget.
- Mr. Rohan Edrisinha, the International Project Manager, briefed the PEB members on the context, vision and activities of the project and also the results of the first quarter. He noted that the main activities continued to respond to the priority issues and needs of the Constituent Assembly and political parties and strategic interventions to facilitate the adoption of a radical new constitution that was compatible with constitutionalism international best practice. Prof Krishna Khanal, the CCD director, supplemented the Project Manager's presentation. He briefed the PEB on his observations on the progress made by the project in the first quarter.

Major discussions and Suggestions

Lars P Christensen from DANIDA HUGOU appreciated the project shift towards core issues and strategic intervention. However, he further suggested that the project should move towards more systematic strategic intervention and events rather than *ad hoc* dialogues. The project, he thought, should be more discriminating with respect to responding to specific requests. He recommended that the project keep an eye on key processes that are still need to be addressed. This was also supported by Dag Nagoda from the Norwegian Embassy. Mr. Christensen also suggested forming a group of key constitution national experts/lawyers who would be available for the project and even to assist the parties and key actors in the constitution making process.

Dag Nagoda highlighted the importance of effective coordination so that the International support for the process would avoid sending mixed messages regarding the constitution making process and suggested that the project should strengthen its informal networks. He emphasized that the civil society outreach program should focus on getting the draft Constitution when it is produced out to the people rather than be an awareness raising

program. The project should do more low profile and high quality meetings, documents or papers sometimes even without the UNDP or CCD logos.

The CA Secretary General noted that the project has been successful in providing technical support to the CA and CA Secretariat in the constitution drafting process. He also stressed the importance of the project being able to respond when necessary to the *ad hoc* requests of the CA. Since Nepal's political process is volatile, he said that it was often difficult to predict a systematic approach only. He further supported the idea of facilitating issue-based events which lead to practical and useful outcomes.

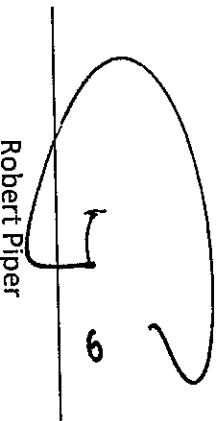
The Chair of NGO Federation appreciated the project focus shift to working with senior leaders and contentious issues. However he also suggested that the UN should bring civil society leaders and senior CA members together to forge consensus in order to bring the constitution out on time.

The Deputy Country Director of UNDP presented a budget status report to the PEB. He stressed that the project had reduced its national staff by 9%, international staff by 60% and overall operational cost by 20%. He also mentioned that the project has a funding gap of \$2 million for 2011. Resources remain committed against pre-positioned contracts for Civil Society outreach on the draft constitution.

Major Decisions Made

- Endorsement of First Quarter results, Second Quarter Plan of 2011, Revised Human Resource Plan of 2011, Revised Procurement Plan of 2011, and Revised Annual Work Plan of 2011
- Permanent handover of CA assets to CA Secretariat (furniture and equipments)

The PEB was informed that a decision had been made to extend the contracts of the SPCBN Staff until December 2011.



Robert Piper
Resident Representative, UNDP