

	United Nations Development Programme Pacific Office in Fiji	BACK TO OFFICE REPORT (BTOR)
		Submitted by: Nasantuya, Tevita and Vinay Date Submitted: 13th June 2019
Expected Key Outputs of this Mission		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successfully completion of 6 national recruitment and offer letter given to successful candidate. 2. Negotiate a possible office space within government and setup needs or scope for office space in countries if government allocated space is not available. 3. Networking and getting to know key stakeholders including meeting the UN agency presence to know and document some of the challenges and risk 4. Get key requirements from each country on tax compliance and regulatory compliance to opening bank account. 5. An assessment report for future operational support, inception and capacity building mission which would be undertaken when the project managers and other officers are hired. 		
3. Mission Period (incl. of travel \days):		
From: 17 th May 2019- 8 th June 2019.		
RMI - 20- 24 th May 2019		
FSM - 27- 31 st May 2019		
Palau - 3- 6 th June 2019.		
This report covers period from 3 to 6 June for Palau component of the mission.		
<u>Summary of findings of scoping mission:</u>		
Project for Palau is a complex one as it involves numerous departments/agencies and sheer number of different activities and thus requires more coordination. Furthermore, the project will have a number of procurement actions varying in their complexity and volume.		
Human Resources:		
None of the applications received through jobshop vacancy announcements met minimum qualification requirements and thus mission members sought advice from the NEMO and JPO support to spread the word and headhunt. The main reason given by the national counterparts why qualified applicants didn't submit their applications was that the post is of limited duration and none would leave their posts for one-year duration, even with better than government wages. Job security outweigh salary offer, which is different from previous two countries.		
With support of Coordination Officer and following the meeting with HR Department Head, Ministry of Finance, two applications for Finance post and Procurement post were received respectively. As applications were received on just prior to departure of the mission from Palau, phone interviews were held with both applicants from Suva.		
Office Space and associated requirements, i.e. internet, furniture, equipment:		
Joint Presence Office (JPO) office is not in a position to accommodate the project team given the limited space, nor NEMO can house the team and thus the mission pursued alternative office space.		
Office which was sought after by NEMO Secretary was already taken by another entity.		
Fortunately, in the building which is occupied by Bank of Guam, ADB and IOM, office space (2 rooms with bathroom) was vacated by IOM. From MOSS perspectives the proposed office meets most of the requirements and the landlord is planning to put CCTV.		
There are options for the office furniture, fixing and IT equipment purchase in Koror. Major furniture shop is located in the same building and same floor where JPO is housed.		

Regulatory framework, tax exemptions:

The government counterparts: NEMO and relevant departments, ministries will be in charge of lodging relevant papers for tax exemption and following up with the customs authorities, Ministry of Finance etc.

4. Type of Mission

- Oversight/Monitoring
 Event Related
 Resource Person
 Training/Knowledge sharing
 Others (specify): Scoping mission

Key counterpart (s) and persons you met:

- Executive Secretary for NEMO
- Charge- d' Affairs Japanese Embassy
- Ministry of finance officials
- Director of RT Management& Realty
- Bank of Guam
- International Organization for Migration focal point
- UN Coordination officer
- Various vendors

Mission Member(s)

Nasantuya Chuluun
 Vinay Sharma
 Tevita Cokanasiga

The operations mission team could not hold meeting Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration officials as after discussion with Sharon Sakuma, Coordination Officer, JPO she would discuss the meeting points and would be able to clarify this.

She mentioned that she would be able to assist the project with any exceptions or immigration query by channeling this through the JPO office.

Informal discussion was done with her on some of the things that the project would need support:

- Entry visas for international staff;
- Work permits for international staff and processing timelines;
- Spouse entry requirement and employment permits in the country;
- Importation of personal belongings by international staff, including importation of vehicle. Tax rates on imported items should international staff/UNV not being exempt from them;
- Clearance and work permit for international UNVs in case UNDP is not able to find qualified nationals for Finance/Admin and Procurement positions;
- Tax exemptions on procurement items and requirement documentations such as SBAA;
- Follow up on the office rental with RT Management and Realty;
- 2019 GLOC letter to the government of Palau was given to Sharon for further transmittal to MoFA.

Date: 3rd June 2019, Monday

Meeting at UN Joint Presence Office with Coordination Officer

Time: 8.15am- 9.30am

- This discussion was to strategize the plan for 2 and ½ days and to discuss the:
 - Schedules and understand each stakeholder;
 - The executive setup of government;
 - locations of each offices and;
 - Understand the possible queries and question anticipated from government stakeholders and other partners.

- Sharon briefed the mission team of the draft programme for next 3 days.
- She mentioned that in there are other meetings (opening SPC project) and Parliament sitting which is scheduled in the morning so most the key personnel in government would be attending that.
- The operations team would split up to attend two different meetings in the morning session (Tevita would be visiting bureau of public services system while Nasa/Vinay would be attend NEMO meeting with the rest of the mission).
- She briefed on meeting expectation of the government steering committee and the programme mission team advised that the discussion would be on the project documents and procurement plan. Specification, prioritization would be done during the mission.
- She also mentioned which stakeholders are relevant to visit.
 - NEMO- with office of vice president (works on executive order and no act).
 - BDA – bureau domestic affairs
 - Japan Embassy, JICA -have expertise which they might support therefore a meeting would be organized.
- Discussion also centered on the plan for Tuesday and Wednesday
 - International position interviews – Wednesday, if possible to find panel members from Suva.
 - National positions - hard to attract good candidates as the project is short term. Interview for FSM position need to take place as the applicant is in Palau as well as for RMI as the deadline had past and few applications were received.
- Bulk SMS - One of the strategy that was used in RMI to attract more applications which might be relevant in Palau
- She also advises on some of the challenges face in Palau in regards to national disasters, flooding and communication problem during disaster in remote locations. VHF and HF radios are mostly used.
- Suggested to hold a separate meeting with Japan embassy and JICA due to their keen interest and engagement.
- When the supplementary fund was announced- Government concerns on ODA from Japan. Sharon advised the government reps that the supplementary fund for post disaster management and for all three North Pacific countries: RMI, FSM and Palau.
- All services are centralized (16 state government) and national government looks after health and emergency responses. Outposted officers are the first respondents in case of disasters.

Meeting with National Emergency Management Office

Date and time: 3rd June 2019, 10.00am – 11.30am

Person Met: Jayson Sebalt and Singeo Franz palaunemo@gmail.com

- The mission team introduced the NEMO staff on the mission objective, the project timelines and discuss the projects activity.
- In general, this project is for 1 year and now UNDP has 10 months to implement the project.
- UNDP will have in Country project team: (Process of hiring) 3 national officers:
 - Coordinator
 - Finance and
 - Admin and Procurement.
- Reporting to Deputy project manager based in FSM and Project Manager and support team in Suva

The mission team briefed on the approved PRODOC on the project and governance structure for the Project Board- executive decision jointly by government representative- Vice President (ministry of justice), UNDP and Donor- Supplier (Embassy of Japan)

- **Procurements requirements:**

- The NEMO officer stated that the Director has planned to modify the current office setup and upgrade Office furniture, equipment and other asset.
 - List of items to be purchased to be shared by NEMO and layout proposal for retrofitting of NEMO office.
- Sirens for all 16 states some will have many due to the geographically coverage.
 - The discussion further centered on the type, size and location and what other country have.
 - NEMO to provide the communication equipment's, Repeaters, VHF, HF etc. (existing and requested by states and locations)
- Currently have FM and telephone for disseminating message (example typhoon). POI send the message as per SOPs for any emergency. NEMO message from VHF radios and other method.
 - Generic specifications were requested from NEMO so these items would be tendered after review with telecommunication specifications.
- Currently 4 islands (2 states) that are not connected.
- IOM provided the last batches of radio equipment's (15 hand held VHF's etc.)
- Issues with regards to maintenance plan: Some of the radios equipment's are not working: IOM paid for 1 additional years of warranty.
- Weather office would provide the location of the tsunami monitoring equipment
- Bulk SMS- PNCC have capability, EOC can issue this once the emergency committee is setup.
- Fiber optic- Higher bandwidth would be required.
- TV message can also be used (limited information are done on Evacuation routes and assembly area)
- NEMO retrofit- USD 300k- internal distribution of office and redesign. (can be used for improvement of telecom communication, Digital, SMS and Analog. (Database of disaster management for all the resources pre and post disaster). GIS information requirements and cooperation with Weather authorities is essential. Further discuss with NEMO Secretary on need to have a GIS person in NEMO who can read maps/plan.
- Purchase of Generator and the requirements- to check if the specs would also include other sites.
- Containerized Storage facilities - Pre- positions supplies for emergency requirements. There are other non-government agencies such as Red cross and UNICEF who have provided this to emergency requirement. If this what is needed to be procured the requirement and quantity to be confirmed.
- Radios for search and rescue operations- specification to be provided.
- Detailed meeting with other counterparts would be in the afternoon.
- Visited the office – currently used as training room, which could be given by government to use for the project. However, the room has much mold and not feasible to be used as project office unless complete renovation is done.

Meeting with Ministry of Finance, Chief Division of Human Resources
Person met: Ms. Terra Sairong R. Nabeyama, (terran@palaugov.org.com)
Date and time: 03 June 2019, 10:00 to 11:00 am

- The Chief of Division of Human Resources was briefed by Tevita on UNDP scoping mission and the challenges faced in terms of recruitment of qualified nationals for two positions. She was also advised that only one qualified national applied.
- She was also advised that the team was looking at options of recruiting qualified non-Palauan nationals on United Nations Volunteer contracts for those who are interested in the positions due to the challenge in recruiting interested nationals and urgency in the recruitment of project staff. Ms Nabeyama said she did not have any issues with the recruitment of qualified non-Palauan nationals and highlighted that there are labor laws for foreign workers and this is processed through the Ministry of Justice, Foreign Labor unit.
- A question was posed to the Chief on how UNDP Pacific office can attract qualified interested nationals?
 - Duration of contract needs to be long term
 - Technical Requirements needs to be revised
 - Qualification Requirements needs to be reviewed as master's and bachelor's qualified nationals are limited especially for shorter term contracts

What are some of the reasons why the UN may not able to attract qualified nationals when recruiting?

- Palauan nationals are not confident and shy away when they read the Technical Requirements for UN positions
- Qualifications needs to be revised and better aligned with the qualifications in the local labour market
- Contracts need to have a longer duration rather than the initial 1-year contracts
- If salary is highlighted in the advertisement than it may attract applicants

Ms. Nabeyama further highlighted some items that were important to note;

- International Staff based with government get housing allowances
- Social Security benefit is 14% of total salary remuneration
- Health Benefit 5% of total salary remuneration
- Tax is 6% for the first 8000 dollars and any amount above 8000 dollars is 12%
- Training and Development benefits are ongoing, especially international training

Tevita thanked the Chief for allowing some time for the meeting and requested if she could share some of the high paying private firms in Palau and share the Palau Government salary scale in which she agreed too.

Date: 4th June 2019, Tuesday
Time: 8.30 – 12.00pm

Mr. Uchel Tmetuhl

Director of RT Management & Realty, Inc (utmetuchi@gmail.com)

- Mr. Uchel showed the vacant space which had two rooms and separate restroom.
- This space shown was perfect in terms of its location in the town center and across the road from the Vice President office which would be key stakeholder and in the vicinity of UNJPO office.

- Other offices which are in this building are: Bank of Guam, ADB and IOM, and some shops with jewelry and tourist items.
- The NEMO- executive secretary was also fully satisfied with this office space.
- The space is approximately 800 square feet and the proposed rental is \$2.00 per square feet. Additional cost for common space which include walkway and stairs.
- Also advised that the lease term would be approximately 1 year and that the UN lease agreement would be used.
- Further discussion would be done with Kevin and Noud before further discussion. Both Kevin and Noud approved the location and requested the mission to proceed with the rental. Standard lease agreement was shared with the Manager and lawyer of the firm is looking at it.
- Prior to this meeting also site visit other few locations in Koror and nearby to look for office space.

Meeting with Bank of Guam

Time: 12.00 – 12.30pm.

Person met: Customer services office.

- Almost all the information was similarly to the previous visit to Bank of Guam in RMI and FSM.
- A copy of requirement for opening an account and fee and charges was shared.

Time: 3:00 pm– 7:30 pm

The mission members conducted interviews for RMI Finance/Administration and Procurement Logistics Officers posts. The panel interviewed four candidates and only recommended one applicant for Procurement/Logistics post.

The team also interviewed one candidate for Finance/Administrative Offer post in FSM as she was on mission to Palau. Following the interview, she emerged the recommended candidate for the post.

Date 5th June 2019, Wednesday

Meeting with Japanese Embassy

time: 9.00am- 10.00am

Person met:

Takeshi Ogino (First Secretary and Charge d'Affaires) takeshi.ogino@mofa.go.jp

Tachihara Yoshikazu (JICA Resident Representative)

Tachihara.Yoshikazu2@jica.go.jp

- The scoping team did a courtesy visit to the Embassy of Japan and update them on the mission and thanked them for the support.
- As with other 2 countries (RMI and FSM), the Japanese Embassy was appreciative of the visit and are very delighted to be partnering with UNDP in implementing this project.
- Nasantuya gave an update on the progress so far of the scoping mission and part of the prodoc to Charge d'Affaires, including the proposed setup of the office and staffing.
- She also highlighted that the mission team had a very fruitful visit to Palau, RMI and FSM government counterparts and looked at the project implementation milestones, procurement plan and logistic issues which however has its own challenges and issues. The Embassy is also informed about concerns raised by the government of potential going

beyond 12 months period given the complexity of coordination among various stakeholders, number of complex procurements under Palau project. If there are any extension request this would be discussed with the Embassy. But at this point the key is to focus on deliverables.

- The Embassy was briefed on the progress and processes until now. They were also briefed on the operations scoping work that includes recruitment, logistics, office space and procurement plans.
- Luis and Paula had highlighted some of the key aspect of the project which included:
 - The level of coordination's and ownership of the disaster management office and many other counterparts.
 - Consultation with the counterparts to see if the items that are going to be purchased are compatible and interoperable with the existing system.
 - Fiberoptic connection to the EOC has been also discussed with Telecom.
 - Installation of solar panels
 - The modification and retrofitting of the exiting office of EOC to accommodate more space the Emergency Coordination/Disaster Response Team meetings.
 - Discussion also centered on the procurement of communication equipment
 - Training and support by counterparts such as JICA and SPC to ensure continuity of the programme after the completion of the project.
 - The government and counterparts will be trained, and their capacity are built to ensure sustainability.
- JICA also shared their training details which the local partners (NEMO) can consider for training their staff.
- Nasa also highlighted they the team has been facing challenge in getting qualified candidates for the finance and procurement positions. The project team are focused on achieve the delivery and milestones.
- The team also highlighted on the composition of the steering committee (the oversight board) at more operational project management in addition to the Project Board.
- Çharge d'Affaires highlighted that the project/funding was announced in February 2019 and the expectation from the government.
- Mr.Yoshikazu from JICA has advised on the support to countries as they are very prone to many disaster and they want to share their experience to build the resilience and reduce the risk from disaster.
- The discussion has centered on the visibility and press release. The secretary stated they have Facebook account which would also be useful.
- The Çharge d'Affaires assured the team that they are there to support if required by the project and that they will provide few liners for advocacy purposes.

Time: 11.00am-12.00pm

Person Met: Dr. Dale Jenkins – Educational Specialist, International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Nasa briefing and updated Mr. Dale on the project and the reason of the visit was to seek information on their DRR project implementation and comment on some challenges that they have faced in implementing their activities which would be valuable for the team.

Mr. Dale informed that the IOM office in Palau was very new office in the Northern Pacific.

The discussion focused on the project they had implemented with government partner or were currently implementing, which doesn't focus on causes of natural disasters but more on adaptation to them and disaster risk recovery and education in this regard.

Dale also shared information on equipment which was provided by their project ((VHF) and how our project could compliment it.

The meeting was to also find out some of the challenges they faced in implementing their projects in Palau and remote states and thus find out ways in which they can collaborate to bring synergy and avoid duplication and to avoid cost on items that are already been provided by IOM.

Debriefing meeting with Chief of staff- Vice President office, Minister of State, NEMO and other national National Partners.

Venue: NEMO

Date and Time: 5th June 2019 2.00pm – 4.00pm

- The mission team provide an update on the progress of the mission to the NEMO and all the stakeholders highlighting to them the meeting held with various counterparts
- The team went through the project activity and the modification that would be required on the procurement plan due to the changes after discussion throughout the 3days.
- During the meeting the team went over each activity and clarified equipment, which is to be bought or activities to be carried out. This segment is covered in the report of programme mission members.
- Overall the meeting very cordial and each government partners were aware of the ownership of their activity and additional requirements that they had to provide to the mission team.
- Local construction companies capacity could be an overstretch due to activities leading to OCEAN Conference to be held in Palau next year.
- Departments posed question to what extent they will be involved in procurements to which answer was that they role is critical as they are primary resource for identifying specifications, BOQ, ToRs. They can be involved in review/evaluation process as observers.
- The team also thanked them and JPO for the support received during the mission.