

## Minutes of the Fourth Board Meeting on Enhancing Disaster and Climate Resilience in Palau through improved Disaster Preparedness and Infrastructure Project

West Hotel, 8:00am, 23 July 2020

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### Present:

#### Executive

Kevin Petrini\*  
teleconference) UNDP Deputy Resident Representative a.i. and OIC (By

#### Senior Beneficiary

Mr. Waymine Towai Executive Director, National Emergency Management Office (NEMO)  
Ms. Maria Ngemaes Meteorologist-In-Charge, National Weather Service Office (NWSO)  
Ms. Indira Daniels Special Assistant, Vice President Office

#### Development Partner

Mr. Shu Momose Third Secretary, Embassy of Japan in Palau

#### Project Assurance

Ms. Merewalesi Laveti\* UNDP Monitoring & Evaluation Analyst (By teleconference)

#### Project Manager & support team

Ms. Nasantuya Chuluun\* Operations Support Advisor (By teleconference)  
Ms. Yoko Ebisawa\* UNDP Project Manager (By teleconference)  
Mr. Murod Ruziev\* UNDP Project Procurement Specialist (By teleconference)  
Ms. Shivani Devi\* Finance Officer (By teleconference)  
Ms. Ana Beramaisuva\* Project Assistant (By teleconference)  
Ms. Zayaan Communication \*Specialist (By teleconference)

#### Palau in country team

Ms. Aleyda Valdes UNDP Country Project Coordinator  
Ms. A. Rose Maidesil UNDP UNDP Finance/Admin Officer  
Mr. Dale Kacivi UNDP Project Palau Procurement/Logistics Officer

\* Virtual Attendance

### 1.0 Introduction

- The Chairperson, Mr. Kevin Petrini, UNDP DRR a.i and OIC formally opened the Board Meeting by welcoming everyone and adopting the agenda.
- The welcome was followed by an opening prayer, introduction of both the Board members, UNDP staff and reading and adoption of the previous meeting minutes.

### 2.0 Project Overview and Progress-April to Present

- Ms. Aleyda Valdes, UNDP Country Project Coordinator, presented the Project progress from April 2020 till the present for each of the 3 outputs, including visual documentation and communication presence in local media and the UNDP cooperate website. (Refer to the attached).
- Ms. Yoko Ebisawa, UNDP Project Manager, reported the project's total expenditure is \$1.3 million as of June 30, 2020. With respect to risks, she highlighted that 8 activities were or will be affected by COVID19 and the project is seeking supports from the counterpart to permit some essential persons to enter Palau.
- Regarding the lessons learned which are newly added, Ms. Ebisawa suggested to conclude an overarching partnership agreement between the UNDP and NOAA if UNDP continues supporting North Pacific countries in Meteorology. She stated further that it is important to obtain the latest information on Palau's response to

COVID19 to plan the timeline and secure additional budget for activities which will be affected by the travel restrictions.

### 3.0 Discussion on the Progress and timeline

- Referring to the project timeline, Mr. Waymine Towai raised a concern regarding COVID19 and its negative impact on achieving the project deliverables within the existing timeframe. Mr Towai's concern was to address the issue of extending the project timeline as result of the current global pandemic. Mr. Petrini agreed that the pandemic has greatly affected the supply chain including travel. He stated that he agreed with Mr. Towai's concern for the project extension and explained the need to discuss the extension based on the workplan.
- Ms. Ebisawa suggested until June 2021 but expressed the need for buffer time to wrap up. Optimistically speaking, September 2021 will be an ideal time to complete the Project. However, this will depend on the travel restrictions and the procurement status.
- Mr. Towai advised that Palau is currently facing the last repatriation flight. He stated that there are other major capital projects happening in Palau and emphasized the need for essential service flights. He estimates that in January 2021, Palau may consider allowing some flights in. However, it depends on the purpose of travel and how the quarantine process will be handled. In case this does not happen in January 2021, then June 2021 is not a realistic end date. He thought it is safer to push the timeline further.
- Mr. Towai asked about how we are considering the request for project extension proposal. For example, is UNDP planning to cut or adjust some of the activities to accommodate additional costs? Or will we request for an additional funds? Mr Towai recognizes that UNDP requires additional cost associated the with a project extension, but he is unaware at this point of where to cut project costs.
- Mr. Momose recognized the uncertainties of using chartered flights as required experts may not be able to secure return flights and additional days may be required for the quarantine process, which may increase costs. He requested the Board consider the possibility of utilizing local experts. However, Mr. Towai advised that the country lacks the required expertise for certain activities.
- Ms. Valdes shared the estimated costs discussed during the stakeholders meeting as \$6,944 per person required for the cost of PCRs and accommodation/meals in Palau.
- Mr. Momose acknowledged the estimated cost and further recommended that we bring in the experts once the quarantine process is lifted considering these costs.
- Mr. Petrini summarized the discussions so far. We hear the needs of extension which does not have concerns from the board. Another discussion is about the timeline and we hear that the suggestion to target the project until June 2021 is extremely optimistic with the current COVID19 restriction. He also heard that the project can be implemented activities as planned if the project duration is by June 2021. However, we need to secure additional resources or prioritize activities by cutting some activities if the project needs to continue beyond June 2021.
- Mr. Towai raised a question as to whether the costed extension will impact some of the ODA projects that Palau has today and in the future. Mr. Momose mentioned that he is not in the position to respond to the issue.
- Mr. Momose further asked about the additional cost required for extension. Ms. Ebisawa responded that the cost would be estimated depending on the time for lifting travel restrictions. we must constantly monitor the progress which will affect the estimated costs. She also mentioned that the project has started reduction of operation costs. For example, we do not hire the position of Deputy Project Manager which was originally planned in the project. Mr. Petrini asked the board members what decisions we make today, and we could revisit such decisions in three months when we have the next board meeting.
- Mr. Towai mentioned the marching order from the Office of the President to continue implementing the projects. Hence, we need to think creatively in terms of ensuring the safety of Palauan and accommodate the projects happening in Palau. Regarding the essential services, we are trying to reach a solution to ensure the continuation of these project deliverables and procurement items through incoming flights. The current quarantine process is 14 days; however, a shorter time frame is under consideration. He mentioned Palau is trying to ensure adherence of international regulations based on the studies of COVID19. The re-opening of commercial flights in January 2021 is still an assumption.
- Ms. Valdes brought up the concerns raised during the fourth Stakeholders Meeting, attended by approximately 12 representatives from different entities. The overview and agreement of all the participants (national counterparts) suggested that we request the extension for as long possible, as a safety measure, however, aim to finalize within the stated timeline. Ms. Valdes suggested that the project needs to have a contingency plan

with figures to be deliberated in the next board meeting. These calculations should be based on the possibility of different scenarios.

- Mr Petrini responded to the stakeholders' suggestion that as a Board, we need to decide based on what we see is in the best interest for this project's progress. September has been tabled, however, with a view to finish by June 2021.
- Mr. Towai pointed out that Palau EDCR project is progressing faster than FSM and RMI. He hoped the board will consider the extension by acknowledging that there is quite a bit of contribution to ensure that this project is progressing faster. He asked if we could push the timeframe until the end of 2021.
- Mr. Petrini explained that the workplan will be valid up to June 2021, and that there's sufficient funds to implement the project up to June 2021. Further extension will have a cost element and the issue of additional cost must be addressed. Mr. Momose clarified the concern brought up regarding RMI and FSM by clarifying that the two countries did not require cost extension. However, Mr. Towai pointed out that these three countries are very different. He is reluctant to submit a request for a no cost extension, knowing that there will be costs associated with the extension.
- Ms. Ebisawa mentioned that the board agrees that the extension of the timeline is critical in order to further implement the activities. Whether till June, September, or December, we need to formalize the extension of the project timeline and make an official request to the Government of Japan for an extension Ms. Ebisawa added that for the next board meeting, the project team will provide calculations to determine the amount of funds needed for an extension and will consider looking into additional funding or amending the existing activities.
- Mr. Petrini was in favor to wait until the next board meeting to do a formal request and avoid causing further difficulties in making two requests in the same year.
- Mr. Towai inquired if between now and the next board meeting, will there be dialogue between UNDP and the Gov of Japan?
- Mr. Petrini thought there needs to be a dialogue between UNDP and the Gov of Japan to understand whether this will be possible or not and then we can reflect that back to the board.
- Mr. Momose agreed on the proposal and asked whether the next board meeting will be in two months.

#### **4.0 Discussion on the Progress from the Board and timeline**

- The Board approved revision of Annual Work Plan (AWP) 2020 to be reduced to 4 million.
- The Board approved a LOA between UNDP and Bureau of Domestic Affairs (BODA) to the increase of power supply to the AM Tower Rehabilitation. The value of the LOA is around \$6,000 USD.

#### **5.0 Agreements**

- Recognized and agreed on the need for a project extension.
- Explore the possibility of a cost extension with the Government of Japan.
- Approved the Revised 2020 Annual Work Plan.
- Agreed on the LOA with Bureau of Domestic Affairs
- Next Board meeting within 3 months.

#### **6.0 Concluding remarks**

Mr Petrini expressed his excitement of the progress of the EDCR Project, despite the extraordinary circumstances we face. He also expressed his appreciation to the Government of Japan, the Palau Government and UNDP.

Meeting concluded at 10:20 am Palau time.

**Chairperson**

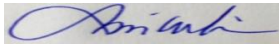


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**Kevin Petrini**  
**UNDP Deputy Resident Representative a.i. & OIC**

**Date** 13-Oct-2020

**Secretary**



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**Analee Maidesil**  
**Finance and Administrative Officer**

**Date** 12/10/2020