

Managing risks associated with the Gold Ridge Mine Tailings Storage Facility Project

Quarterly Report 2017

Country: SOLOMON ISLANDS

Period Covered: January – March 2017

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Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Section one: Summary of Project Achievements

Managing the risks which associated with the Gold Ridge Mine Tailings Storage Facility Project started in June 2016. The project started off slowly with the implementation of its planned activities in 2016 and the project has moved forward and made some progress in the first quarter of 2017. The update and details of what the project has achieved or not achieved are described below.

Outcome 1: Contingency plans developed and put in place in an inclusive and participatory manner

The contingency planning at the institutional level started in November 2016 with the engagement of an international consultant to support the development of the contingency plan at the Institutional level. The contingency plan for disaster risk reduction and mitigation at an institutional level was finalised on the 9th of February. The contingency plan has clearly defined the minimum prepared actions, the sectoral response and preparedness plans, early warning procedures and coordination and management arrangements for various scenarios, including the priority scenario of spillovers, as well as dam collapse.

The table top exercise was conducted on the 8th of February to the draft contingency plan in terms of the management and coordination arrangements and the preparedness and response actions in the individual Sector Response Plans. A follow up debriefing was conducted and lessons learned, best practices and action points were identified for follow up as per minutes of the table top exercise workshop.

Several technical assessments are expected to be conducted to provide data to inform the contingency planning process both at the institutional and community levels. The achievement to date on these assessments is that all terms of references have been finalised and shared with procurement section to move forward with the procurement process.

Outcome 2: The capacity of SIG on early warning and detection enhanced to effectively monitor the situation for early warning and response

Initial assessment has been done by MMERE for the Geochemistry Laboratory equipment need. A list of the equipment needed has been shared with the project office. For the NPHL, the scoping mission in relation to the capacity and needs analysis of the NPHL is planned for April with support from WHO. The implementation of some of the project activities will depend on the completion of the assessments to be conducted under outcome 1.

Providing the support to enhance the capacity of the relevant government ministries to conduct regular monitoring of the TSF through provision of equipment and training is one key focus of the project. The project has successfully purchased the vehicle under this project outcome to support MECDM in the overall implementation of this project.

Project Management

Recruitment

The recruitment of a project assistant was agreed on during the project board meeting. The position will be filled through direct contract approach and the procurement process is at the completion stage to get the individual Contract to start.

Project Committees

The project held its project board meeting on the 16th of February 2017. The project annual work plan for 2017 was revised and finalised based on the discussions the project board meeting. The project

annual work plan and the project board minutes have been endorsed with follow up actions to be carried out by the project office and most of these actions have been completed.

The project board conducted a formal meeting between the government representatives (MECDM & MMERE), WHO Managing Risks Associated with Gold Ridge TSF Staff (UNDP) and the GCIL representatives was held on the Friday 24th February 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to inform and to consult key stakeholders in the Managing Risks Associated with Gold Ridge TSF project and to establish good working relation partnership towards the implementation of the project planned activities.

Multi- Year Budget and Annual Work Plan

The multi-year budget has been discussed as part of the annual work plan during the project board meeting. It has been revised and changed in the finalized project document and major changes in the sequencing of activities and the budget allocation.

Procurement

The procurement plan for 2017 has been finalized.

Section two: Project progress tracking sheet

The project implementation schedule is developed and endorsed as part of the Annual Work Plan. February.

Section 3: Project Risks and Issues

3.1 Project Risks

In the project document, there are eight risks identified that may affect the implementation of the project.

#	Description	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Mngt response	Remarks and Comments
1	Differences between GCIL & SIG over mining lease issue and Mine ownership, project could be used by either group for political gain	Project could come to a standstill and not even get off the ground if differences become an issue	Open dialogue with and involvement from the start of company (GRML/GCIL), landowner groups (MDA, KTDA, GRCLC) and G Province and other stakeholders. Needs to be clarified that project is for benefit of all, and is needed urgently to ensure safety of downstream communities. Possibly need to have MOU in place???	Engagement and the Involvement of the LO groups must be strengthened. <i>Continue consultations with relevant SIG ministries and its staff and GCIL. Agreed to have monthly meeting with GCIL to keep each updated on the implementations of activities</i>
2	Most landowner groups part of GCIL, locals could interfere with project if	Project work taking place around TSF and downstream communities could be halted at any stage, project personnel/	Proactive, informative and engaging community awareness to be carried out diligently, necessary that	The MDA, KTDA and GRCLC should play a major role in the Community level activities.

	unhappy with SIG position	contractors/ consultants denied access to areas	MDA, KTDA and GRCLC be involved and possibly GCIL.	<i>Close consultations and engagement of representatives of the MDA, KTDA and GRCLC in the project implementation.</i>
3	UNDP seen as backing govt over locals, getting caught in the middle over issue of Gold Ridge Mine	Reputation of UNDP within that area damaged, reducing acceptance of any future UNDP projects in Central Guadalcanal. Wider damage to UNDP reputation if views expressed in media. Possibly lead to less cooperation or assistance from locals causing delays to project	Community awareness, Involvement of landowner groups as early as possible, these groups would also greatly assist with awareness programs. Open communication and regular updates to landowner groups. Where possible recruit locals for unskilled or semi-skilled work related to the project.	UNDP should be facilitating and not seen to be making all the decisions for the activities. <i>Ensure that the lead SIG ministries take the lead in the implementation of activities under their respective ministries and division</i>
4	Perception from landowners over project and related activities, possible lack of trust in government, could raise fear and distrust	Landowners may feel that information not getting to them or project is for SIG benefit only, may not believe what they hear and feel SIG/ UNDP hiding information. Could damage UNDP reputation. Could delay/slow down or halt work and prevent access to certain areas or cause panic	Community awareness, Involvement of landowner groups as early as possible, these groups would also greatly assist with awareness programs. Open communication and regular updates to landowner groups. Where possible recruit locals for unskilled or semi-skilled work related to the project.	Strong involvement and participation by the communities in the CP planning process. <i>The community contingency planning activity hope to address some of this issues and risk</i>
5	Miscommunication, poor coordination of activities and conflicts between stakeholders involved	Incomplete and mixed messages to landowners and stakeholders causing trust issues, delays to project, incomplete and inefficient work, absence of necessary personnel to perform activities or represent stakeholders	Need to have an agreement early on with all stakeholders, possibly look into signing MOU?? Early establishment of reporting system and chain of command, recommend all stakeholders to be regularly updated and focal point person for each ministry, landowner group/community, company or other stakeholder identified early.	Development of a communication guidelines and strategy to guide the dissemination of key information and data
6	Vandalism of equipment and security/ personal safety of contractors/consultants involved. Past incidents of equipment being	Project to come to a halt if personal safety under threat, injury occurs or equipment destroyed financial cost of compensation and replacement of damaged equipment. Loss of critical	Community awareness to cover benefits of project and dangers if nothing is done. Outline work and monitoring that needs to be done. Propose recruitment of any unskilled and semi-skilled labour (e.g. Security) mainly	Involvement of communities closer to the TSF vicinity and close collaboration with GCIL who are owners of the mine.

	vandalised or set on fire by locals	data if monitoring equipment damaged	from surrounding communities and landowner groups. Risks to be communicated to contractors/consultants, liability of UNDP clearly established.	
7	Possible damage to structure of TSF leading to leak of contaminated water or tailings	leak would delay project, extra work to clean up, assess impact and reassure or compensate communities affected	Proper analysis of impacts hazards and risks to be carried out by all consultants/contractors before commencing any work. Requirement for contractors to put in place safeguards/ safety procedures to be outlined in TOR. Maybe need to do EIA	Carryout the assessments activities properly and ensure that proper reports are produced by the consultants
8	Uncontrolled release of sensitive/ incomplete data, misinterpretation by communities/ public/media causing panic	Communities not happy, live in fear, having no trust and confidence on the government and its partners. No access to the TSF and the communities. Project activities are not implemented.	Proper communication channels with proper screening of information to be disseminated to communities and stakeholders	Development of a communication guidelines and strategy to guide the dissemination of key information and data

3.2 Project Issues

During the institutional contingency planning process, some issues and gaps were identified. Some of issues identified will have direct impacts on the overall implementation of the project activities. The following are some of the key issues that are identified in this reporting period;

- Coordination and support from the key SIG Ministries and their respective divisions to support the implementation of the project activities are still weak. It is important to discuss and establish a regular communication mechanism to support the overall implementation of the project.
- The project currently has one staff to implement its plan activities and affects the overall progress of moving things quickly. The recruitment of one additional staff to support the implementation of the project is needed.
- The ownership of the Gold Ridge Mine TSF Contingency Plan by Guadalcanal Provincial Government is an issue that needs to be addressed. The Guadalcanal Provincial Government will support and resources to manage and implement the contingency plan.

Section 4: Lessons Learnt

The project has not identified any specific lesson learnt this reporting quarter and hope to provide more information on this when more activities are implemented as plan in the next quarter.

Section 5: Additional Information