

Russian Federation-UNDP Trust Fund for Development

Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting

Venue: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation building
Date and Time: 12 April 2017, 10:00 Moscow time
Subject: 6th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Russia-UNDP Trust Fund for Development

Participants:

From the Russian Federation:

Dmitry Maximychev, Deputy Director, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation);

Denis Ulin, Deputy Director, Department of Europe, North America and International Organizations, Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation (on behalf of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation);

Demian Smilevets, Deputy Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation (on behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation);

Anastasia Zhilova, Leading Counselor, Department of International Financial Relations, Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation (on behalf of the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation);

Ekaterina Fotina, First Secretary, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation;

Anastasia Pankova, Chief Expert, Department of Europe, North America and International Organizations, Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation;

From the United Nations Development Programme:

Rastislav Vrbensky, Deputy Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS - Chairperson of the Steering Committee (on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme);

Joanna Kazana, Head of Country Office Liaison and Oversight Unit, the United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS (on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme);

Ivan Zverzhanovski, Team Leader, New Partnerships and Emerging Donors, the United Nations Development Programme Bureau for External Relations and Advocacy, Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS (on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme);

Natalia Olofinskaya, Regional Technical Specialist - Adaptation to Climate Change, Climate Change and DRR Team, Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS;

Alexander Averchenkov, Manager of the Russia-UNDP Trust Fund for Development, the United Nations Development Programme Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS

Anastasia Maximova, Partnership Support Analyst, New Partnerships and Emerging Donors, the United Nations Development Programme Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS

Natalia Voronkova, Project Manager, New Partnerships and Emerging Donors, the United Nations Development Programme Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS

Summary of the points discussed and the decisions taken

1. Opening of the Meeting and Adoption of the Agenda

Chairperson:

- Welcomed the SC members and all participants;
- On behalf of UNDP thanked representatives of Russian Ministries for their constructive engagement in preparation of this meeting and for working consultations;
- Introduced the Provisional Agenda and highlighted the main expected results;
- Invited the SC to adopt the Agenda of the 6th SC meeting.

Decision: The Agenda of the SC meeting has been adopted (doc. SC 6/1).

2. Results of the first Call for proposals under the Climate Change Window and approval of the project proposals

Chairperson:

- Made a reference to the Note on the overview of project proposals submitted by UNDP Country Offices and UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub under the first Call for Proposals of the Climate Change Window;
- Invited TFD Manager to present the Note and project proposals.

TFD Manager:

- Informed SC that the Call for Proposals was announced on 18 January 2017, responding to it four UNDP COs and the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub submitted 10 project proposals (6 country-specific and 4 – regional) with total requests for potential funding from the CCW at \$9, 82 million;
- Presented the procedure and criteria for consolidated assessment of proposals by the members of the UNDP internal sub-committee;
- Presented the proposals one by one and highlighted main features and issues for each proposal, including comments and recommendations of the internal UNDP expert sub-committee on the projects improvement during further preparation.

On the project proposal “Climate Change Education and Awareness Project – Climate Box”:

MFA:

- Noted that the project has a potential to promote the Russian language which is an important positive factor to consider, and asked about the ratio between copies to be distributed in Russian and in national languages;
- Asked about the methodology to assess the success and impact of the educational and awareness raising activities;
- Reminded on the importance of all project’s full adherence to the Communication and Visibility Strategy of the TFD;
- Informed that on all project proposals consultations will be further conducted with relevant Russian ministries and agencies. Additional comments might be raised and should be considered at the project document preparation stage.

MoF:

- Stressed the importance of climate change education at the level of secondary and vocational education, including TVET institutions and universities, asked the project team for the possibility to accommodate this need via the project;
- Highlighted the role of agriculture in all the target countries and asked whether the project can also focus on farmers and rural communities.

MED:

- Asked about the feedback on the Climate Box from existing users and implementing COs;
- Asked how many people/students will be covered with the tool-kit.

UNDP (Joanna Kazana):

- Noted that the toolkit is relevant to SDGs, looks attractive, and presents the complex issues in a friendly way and bases on the Russian knowledge/expertise.

UNDP (Natalia Olofinskaya):

- Provided clarifications requested by the SC members. Informed that the impact monitoring methodology has been developed and piloted in Sochi by Russian experts and will be applied to assess the project results;
- Informed that the number of copies in Russian and local languages will be defined for each country individually based on the demand and in consultations with beneficiary government. Clarified that the project will work closely with the Russian Embassies on the ground to assess such needs and to promote the language cooperation;
- Informed that the Climate Box has been introduced in 2015 in Russia (Sochi and Moscow) with a very positive documented feedback from teachers and students. Over the past year the project has been implemented in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan; all three countries are willing to continue and expand the project activities. Feedback from educational authorities and teachers has been positive;
- Noted that one box serves 30 class students and stays with the class, about 1000 boxes will be disseminated in each country and wide coverage will be achieved; in Russia over one year in 2015 UNDP was able to reach out 11,300 students in over 150 schools;
- Noted that currently the box is more appropriate for primary and secondary school kids; it includes various interactive games, cartoons and similar elements. However, over the past years UNDP projects in Russia developed a wide range of educational materials on energy efficiency targeting universities, vocational and professional education. Through the proposed project we can disseminate these educational materials to the appropriate higher education institutions in the beneficiary countries;
- Noted that rural schools will be targeted. In addition, the tool-kits will be disseminated via rural clubs, NGOs, other channels outreaching the rural communities.

Decision:

The Steering Committee approved the project proposal “Climate Change Education and Awareness Project – Climate Box” with possible TF funding up to \$469,800, and recommended that the UNDP project team in preparing the project document will consider including dissemination of educational material targeting the universities and vocational training institutions, focusing on rural population and will ensure full compliance with the visibility guidelines.

On the project proposal “Adapting to drought: Strengthening sustainable water planning and management in Santiago de Cuba, for greater resilience and adaptation to climate change”:

MFA:

- Drew attention to the issue of visibility and the need for beneficiaries to have clear understanding on the Russian source of support.
- Proposed to provide linkages with other Russia-funded projects in Cuba also beyond DRR.

MED:

- Asked for a clarification related to the UNDP cofinancing and the source of it;

- Highlighted the need for the project to have synergies with the two Russia-funded UNDP projects in Cuba after the hurricanes Matthew and Sandy, and to consider a possible use of relevant Russian expertise and equipment.

MoF:

- Supported the earlier comments on the linkages with other Russia-funded projects and use of Russian expertise;
- Proposed to introduce a clear distinction between the target population and local institutions on the project activities.

Chairperson:

- Provided clarification on the nature of UNDP parallel funding and assured that visibility requirements will be strictly adhered to.

Decision:

The Steering Committee approved the project proposal "Adapting to drought: Strengthening sustainable water planning and management in Santiago de Cuba, for greater resilience and adaptation to climate change" with possible TFD funding up to \$1,000,000.

The Steering Committee recommended that the UNDP project team in preparing the project document will outline clear links to Russia-funded projects "Support to housing recovery and community infrastructure by strengthening technological capabilities of the local construction materials industry after the impact of Hurricane Matthew" and "Supporting the resilient recovery of the city of Santiago de Cuba after the impact of Hurricane Sandy", consider use of relevant Russian expertise and equipment; ensure clearer distinction between the project activities focused on target population and on local institutions, comply with TFD visibility requirements to make sure that target population recognizes the Russian funding during the project implementation.

On the project proposal "Addressing climate change impact through enhanced capacity for wildfires management in Armenia":

MoF:

- Noted that Russia has extensive experience in fire forest management in the EMERCOM, suggested establishing links on the issue of trainings, list of equipment, etc.;
- Asked for clarification on how financing to be leveraged from additional projects will be achieved and who will be doing it.

MED:

- Asked for clarification on the issue of generating investments income and jobs, and on whether jobs will be sustained as the project finalizes;
- Asked for clarification on the budget for Component 1 and more detailed information on it, as it does not look very reasonable.

MoNRE:

- Noted that the Ministry and the Federal Agency for Forestry (Rosleskhoz) have large experience in terms of forest management and this experience could be useful in the project.

TFD Manager:

- Confirmed that EMERCOM needs to be involved, explained that the Armenian Government and ongoing Small Grant Programme will provide major part of cofinancing.

UNDP (Natalia Olofinskaya):

- Explained that based on the experience of the previous similar successful UNDP projects in Armenia and other countries the project can generate employment and income to the local

communities through local tree planting and forest management activities organized through local employment-guarantee schemes.

Decision:

The Steering Committee approved the project proposal "Addressing climate change impact through enhanced capacity for wildfires management in Armenia" with possible TFD funding up to \$1,000,000.

The Steering Committee recommended that the UNDP project team in preparing the project document will outline clearer linkages between climate change adaptation and DRR, and linkages between project activities and climate change impacts, including estimation of mitigation potential, and will provide details on job creation activities and its sustainability, and on the budget for Component 1.

The Steering Committee also recommended to consider more active cooperation with the EMERCOM, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Forestry (Rosleskhoz).

On the project proposal "Facilitating Climate Resilience in Tajikistan":

MoF:

- Expressed concerns about potential duplication of this proposal with the regional proposal on enhancing access to climate finance. Noted that the proposal mostly covers the work of consultants and not so much work on the ground; proposed to outline clearer cooperation with other ministries;
- Noted that some project activities are not clear enough and requested more detailed explanation on the elements of the process to apply for GCF and role of the project to be outlined in the project document.

MED:

- Asked for clarification on what is meant by Russia serving as a broker and what expectations are there on Russia's role apart from funding the project.

TFD Manager:

- Explained that there are no expectations of Russia other than funding for the proposed project and the 'broker' was used in the sense that the proposed project will help Tajikistan to outreach new climate finance sources.

UNDP (Natalia Olofinskaya):

- Noted that Tajikistan has comparatively much higher needs associated with project preparation capacity including the need for external expertise. Thus there might be not enough support available via the regional project. Noted that through the implementation of a series of disaster risk reduction projects in Tajikistan a number of potential project ideas for GCF have been outlined. These are mainly infrastructure projects that require heavy technical feasibility studies and engineering designs to be completed;
- Noted that UNDP will ensure that this project is coordinated with the project on access to climate finance and that there is no duplication.

Decision:

The Steering Committee approved the project proposal "Facilitating Climate Resilience in Tajikistan" with possible TFD funding up to \$1,000,000 and asked the UNDP project team to be much more specific in describing activities to access the climate finance and to make cross-references with the regional project proposal "Enhancing access to climate finance in the ECIS region".

On the project proposal “Support towards Implementing Zimbabwe’s Nationally Determined Contributions”:

MFA:

- Informed that most of Russian support for Zimbabwe is of humanitarian nature and includes food distribution. Suggested that the UNDP CO can consult with the Russian Embassy for more information.
- Recommended to explore a possibility of synergy with other Russia-funded projects.

MoF:

- Noted that leverage ratio is high, and asked on how parallel financing will be distributed.

MED:

- Asked for more details on how the partnerships with Russian business and academics is planning to be established.

Decision:

The Steering Committee approved the project proposal “Support towards Implementing Zimbabwe’s Nationally Determined Contributions” with possible TFD funding up to \$1,000,000 and recommended that the UNDP in preparing the project document will outline links between TFD funding and other cofinancing, ensure clear attribution of the Russian funding to the results, provide more information on cooperation with Russian business and academia and explore potential synergies with Russia-funded projects via communications with the Russian Embassy.

On the project proposal “Regulatory Framework to Promote Energy Efficiency in Countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU)”:

MFA:

- Noted that keeping the broad focus of the project is preferable as it is important to support development of various energy efficiency regulations in the region, and that focusing only on lightening will not save much resources of the project;
- Proposed to engage more with the Eurasian Economic Commission and the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation.

MoF:

- Noted that energy efficiency regulations related projects are already implemented in Armenia and requested clarification on relations of ongoing initiatives to the proposed project;
- Proposed to have a focus on energy-climate nexus, climate smart decisions in the energy efficiency projects;
- Asked for clarification on what is the target audience in consumer awareness activities.

UNDP (Natalia Olofinskaya):

- Explained that the ongoing projects in Armenia are of complementary nature and deal with building energy efficiency and energy management while the proposed project focuses on regulatory instruments for lighting and household appliances and equipment (different set of regulations);
- Explained that direct consumers of household appliances will be directly targeted via consumer awareness campaigns;
- Proposed closer collaboration with Rosstandart as now they have testing laboratories and expertise that can be useful for the EEU countries;

- Informed that there are ideas for potential future project proposals that address climate smart energy management systems.

UNDP (Joanna Kazana):

- Noted that the use of existing Russian expertise in closing GEF projects can facilitate direct experience exchange.

Decision:

The Steering Committee approved the project proposal “Regulatory Framework to Promote Energy Efficiency in Countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU)” with possible TF funding up to \$1,500,000, and recommended that the UNDP in preparing the project document will ensure close cooperation with the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, the Federal Agency on Technical Regulating and Metrology (Rosstandart), Eurasian Economic Commission and outline in detail complementarity between regional interventions and national programs.

On the project proposal “Enhancing access to climate finance in the ECIS region”:

TFD Manager:

- Explained that the project would support development of project applications to the Green Climate Fund, and that several UNDP COs have articulated urgency for such support to come. Suggested to SC members to consider the expedite procedure of approval of the project document via communications in writing.

MFA:

- Expressed a positive opinion on the project proposal and agreed to the proposed accelerated project document preparation.

MoF:

- Noted the support to the project, and the readiness to consider the funding decision via communications;
- Noted that an opinion of the Ministry of natural resources and environment will be highly valuable in regards to the final decision.

MED:

- Asked to clarify the stages of the project and its duration.

UNDP (Natalia Olofinskaya):

- Explained that in Kyrgyzstan, Serbia and Turkmenistan the Governments already prioritized their proposals to GCF and are very keen to start the project development as soon as possible. There is serious demand and eagerness for the project on all governments’ side. Explained that during the lifetime of the project there will be a rolling basis of supporting proposals.

Decision:

The Steering Committee approved the project proposal “Enhancing access to climate finance in the ECIS region” with possible TFD funding up to \$750,000 and recommended that maximum of 10 proposals would be supported in total, not more than 2 per country, each country should first have the opportunity for 1 proposal development before any country receives funding for a second GCF proposal. GCF concepts should be funded based on the National Designated Authority (NDA) or Focal Point formal requests, and the funding for full GCF proposal development should be provided only after the proposal has received internal clearance of UNDP-GEF.

The SC invites UNDP to submit the project document for SC consideration via communication in writing under the expedite procedure.

On the remaining project proposals submitted under the Call for proposals and suggested for rejection: “Integrated Climate Risk Management Programme – Central Asia”; “Dushanbe Sustainable Transport Infrastructure”; and “Strengthening Waste Management Service Delivery in Tajikistan”

MFA:

- Proposed to communicate to the teams that they can apply under the next call for proposals if proposals will be revised.

MoF:

- Noted that Integrated Climate Risk Management Programme – Central Asia could be an interesting project if focused on agriculture, issues of water loss and planning in agriculture, as well as inclusion of activities on provision of equipment and not only training and meetings facilitation. Encourage submission of a revised project proposal under the next Call for proposals;
- Noted that improvement of transport infrastructure in Dushanbe requires huge investments, therefore engagement of a powerful cofinancing partner is a crucial factor.

MED:

- Noted that proposal “Strengthening Waste Management Service Delivery in Tajikistan” is underestimated but it is important from the jobs creation aspect.

UNDP (Ivan Zverzhanovski):

- Proposed to provide the project teams with the SC’s feedback on their submissions.

TFD Manager:

- Noted the competitive nature of the project proposals assessment and explained that each SC’s decisions on a project proposal (approval or rejection) has a financial implication on availability of the TFD’s resources for further applications.

Decision:

The Steering Committee rejected the project proposal “Dushanbe Sustainable Transport Infrastructure”, and noted that to be considered in the future Calls for proposals for the TFD CCW financing the project should enhance GHG emission reduction strategy to provide comprehensive benefits and not only marginal incremental improvements; foresee improved planning on Sustainability/ Scaling up; and further clarification on how the developed capacity will contribute towards securing climate finance. It’s also recommended to engage in cooperation with an IFI (FI).

The Steering Committee rejected the project proposal “Strengthening Waste Management Service Delivery in Tajikistan”, and noted that to be considered in the future Calls for proposals for the TFD CCW financing the project needs to address the CC effects clearly in the objectives and activities and to focus more on innovative solutions and potential to leverage financial resources. It is also recommended to engage in cooperation with an IFI (FI).

The Steering Committee rejected the project proposal “Integrated Climate Risk Management Programme – Central Asia”, and noted that to be considered in the future Calls for proposals for the TFD CCW financing, the project needs to clearly address CC effects in the project activities and incorporate previous project’s lessons learnt and feedback from national partners. It also could be recommended to strengthen the project’s offer on expanding innovation and evidence-base for ICRM at sub-regional level, and to target on specific sectors, such as agriculture, water management with a focus on development planning and regional exchange on knowledge management.

3. Discussion and possible funding decision on the project “Promotion of social and economic opportunities for women and youth in Zerafshan Valley of Tajikistan”

Chairperson:

- Invited the TFD Manager to highlight key revisions made by UNDP Tajikistan.

TFD Manager:

- Informed that UNDP project team established close cooperation with the ILO team in Tajikistan, committed to cooperate with the UNAIDS project in the field of prevention, control and surveillance of HIV / AIDS;
- Noted that lessons and results of the "LIRP" project in Tajikistan and also the experience of similar projects implemented by UNDP in Armenia and Kyrgyzstan were reviewed during the Regional round table "Area-based development programmes: mechanisms, best practices and lessons learnt" held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on 16-17 March 2017.

MoF:

- Shared the opinion that now the links to Russia-funded projects are better than in previous versions, but connection to specific activities of the 9 districts project should be stronger;
- Suggested revising budget in relation to interventions on TVET, UNDP niche is more in linking graduates to employers, while ILO is more experienced in courses development;
- Noted that close coordination with WFP should be maintained to align work on repairing the schools.

Decision:

The Steering Committee is approved the project "Promotion of social and economic opportunities for women and youth in Zerafshan Valley of Tajikistan" and allocate \$USD 1,500,000 for funding this project in 2017-2019.

4. Progress report on implementation of the TFD projects in 2016 and discussion on TFD's projects monitoring and reporting

Chairperson:

- Invited Anastasia Maximova to present the Note on the progress in the TFD projects' implementation and the note on TFD's projects monitoring and reporting.

UNDP (Anastasia Maximova):

- Informed SC members on the status of the TFD projects implementation and presented the draft Annual narrative and financial progress report template.

MFA:

- Asked to share the presentation with the Ministries.

MoF

- Proposed to structure the section of the template on components and activities results separately;
- Asked to share the Project Board materials and the minutes of the meetings of the SIDS project.

UNDP (Joanna Kazana):

- Proposed to include gender dimension in the reporting template as per UNDP procedures, namely to disaggregate by gender project results and to report on partnerships with woman led organizations.

UNDP (Ivan Zverzhanovski):

- Noted that the results section should include project achievements, changes and difficulties.

Decision:

The Steering Committee took note of the progress report.

The Steering Committee took note and approved the Template of Project Annual Narrative and Financial Progress Report with revisions to be made regarding the reporting of results based on the activities structure and gender related information in results and partnerships section.

6. Update on previous TFD SC decisions

TFD Manager:

- Presented the update on previous TFD SC decisions;
- Informed SC on the status of the project proposal “Strengthening capacities for sustainable development finance in the CIS region” with possible TF funding up to \$1,200,000.

Decision:

The Steering Committee took note of the update.

7. Next Steering Committee date and agenda

Chairperson:

- Shared the preliminary composition of the agenda for 7th SC meeting;
- Invited SC Members to share their views on the issues to be elaborated and presented for discussion/approval at the sixth Steering Committee meeting and on dates of the meeting.

SC members:

- Proposed to hold the next SC meeting during the first week of July 2017.

Decision:

The Steering Committee decided to hold the 7th TFD SC meeting during the first week of July 2017 in Moscow. Date should be defined through working level consultations.

8. Other business

There were no issues under this item.

Chairperson of the Steering Committee



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Rastislav Vrbensky

Secretary of the Steering Committee



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Alexander Averchenkov