

Minutes of the 2nd Board Meeting UNDP-GEF MSP on Enhancing Global Environmental Management in Bhutan's Local Governance System

Date: 1st December 2009

Venue: NEC Conference Hall

Members Present:

1. Dasho Nado Rinchen, Deputy Minister, NECS
2. Mr. Bakhodir Burkhanov, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP-Bhutan
3. Mr. Harka B. Gurung, Head, AFD, NECS (Project Director)
4. Mr. Karma L. Rapten, Head, Energy, Disaster and Environment Unit, UNDP-Bhutan
5. Ms Kuenzang L. Sangay, PMCD, GNHC
6. Mr. Kuenga Namgay, Senior Planning Officer, PPD, MoA
7. Ms. Jambay Zangmo, DCD, GNHC
8. Mr. Thinley Dorji, Senior Environment Officer, NECS (Project Manager)
9. Mr. Rinzin Namgay, ICT Assistant, NECS
10. Mr. Sonam Dagay, NECS

Opening Remarks:

Declaring the meeting open, the Hon'ble Deputy Minister extended a warm welcome to all the participants and informed that the designated officials of NECS have been carrying out the implementation of the MSP as additional responsibility on and above their normal functions. His Excellency stated that the Project's objective is to enhance global environmental management in Bhutan's local governance system meaning thereby that its main thrust is to build up the capacity of the environmental bodies at local government level in fulfillment of the objectives set under the three Rio Conventions. His Excellency further apprised that the main agenda of the meeting is to decide on re-appropriation of funds to suit to genuine needs and priorities that have emerged during the implementation of the Project as the needs for these changes were not foreseen during the formulation of the Project.

Presentation by the Project Manager:

Mr. Thinley Dorji, Project Manager made a brief presentation on the progress of implementation and status of various activities initiated under the project. He also presented the details of the budget outlay and informed that the total expenditure till date was approximately USD 95,000. The Hon'ble Deputy Minister suggested to present the detailed break down of the expenditure henceforth.

- With regard to the proposed re-appropriation of funds, UNDP DRR requested for details about the status of the Environment Information Management System (EIMS) and the relation between the EIMS and proposed trainings. The Project Manager explained that EIMS is functional and running but there is further work that needs to be taken up in terms of refining the indicators. The stakeholders and users specifically the Dzongkhag Environment Officers need to be trained in collecting information and feed data and use the EIMS at the Dzongkhag level itself as it is web-based. The Hon'ble Deputy Minister added that the completion of the EIMS got delayed since the server was damaged and there was no back up. Therefore, the data already installed had to be retrieved. Mr. Rinzin Namgay confirmed that works had to be restarted from scratch and the system has become functional now.
- With regard to the purchase of equipments, UNDP DRR requested for details on the type of equipments. The Project Manager clarified that a Laptop for the Project Management Office, GPS sets and clinometers for the DEOs are proposed to be purchased and supplied.
- While presenting the proposal for reallocation of budget the Project Manager said that USD 257,500 has been allocated for Contractual Services in the Project Document while the Project was initially formulated and it is now felt that it needs to be re-appropriated to other activities because of difficulties in assigning budget under the Code: Contractual Services. In this regard, Mr. Karma L Rapten informed the meeting that it was not a lapse at the formulation stage of the Project but it was mainly intended to use this fund for outsourcing activities to training institutes within the country for capacity building of the target groups. The Project Manager explained that as per government rules it was not permissible to pay to the government departments and institutes even if their services are availed. Hence, the fund allocated for Contractual Services cannot be spent and it is therefore, proposed to re-appropriated.



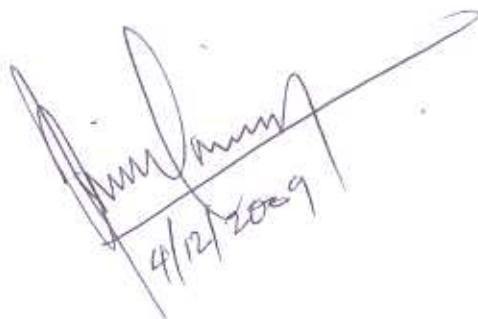
- In connection to the training programs, the Hon'ble Deputy Minister strongly stressed on the need to provide intensive trainings in the form of study tours/short-term courses for the DEOs to enhance their professional capacity. Therefore, the Project Management should plan appropriately to address this need. In continuation, The UNDP DRR informed the meeting that the justification for training programs should be elaborate and should benefit the intended stakeholders.
- The proposed re-appropriation of budget was agreed in principle subject to submission of details in the ensuing Annual Review Meeting. However, as the amount is substantial, a tripartite document signed by the competent authorities of the UNDP-Bhutan, GNHC and NECS is a necessity to formalize it. The UNDP DRR cautioned that UNDP carries out stringent monitoring of projects and unspent funds within the allocated schedule gets withdrawn. Therefore, the management should carefully plan, ask for release of fund and carry out the activities assessing their capability.

Summary Decisions of the Project Board:

- The project management to provide henceforth the detail budget outlay which includes amount released, expenditure and balance under each budget head;
- Budget under contractual services amounting to USD 257,500 to be re-appropriated as proposed by the project management. The revised budget proposal is attached for reference;
- Training for the DEOs was agreed provided the details of the training programme are spelled out clearly and the training programme should benefit the intended target; and
- The proposal for re-appropriation was agreed in principle subject to detail planning of the activities during the Annual Review Meeting and upon signing the tripartite document.

Closing remarks:

In his closing remarks, the Hon'ble DM thanked the participants for their presence and reiterated that the budget re-appropriation was unanimously agreed by the meeting. The meeting was thus adjourned.



A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the date "4/12/2009" written below it.