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Building Resilience and Sustainable Livelihood: Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management/Disaster Risk Reduction into the Agriculture Sector in Guyana

Steering Committee Meeting MINUTES

Time and Date: Tuesday, 5th July, 2016; 10:30 – 12:00

Venue: Large Conference Room, UNDP

Co-Chairs:

- ❖ Ms. Shabnam Mallick, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP
- ❖ Dr. Hector C. Butts, Finance Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Members Present:

See the attached attendance sheet.

Objectives:

- ❖ To discuss and approve TORs of the Steering Committee.
- ❖ To agree on Annual Work Plan 2016.
- ❖ To agree and finalize the implementation plan for 2016.

Welcome remarks

The Co-chair, Dr. Hector C. Butts, Finance Secretary, Ministry of Finance, welcomed everyone to the meeting and encouraged each member to work towards the success of mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the agriculture sector. Each member was asked to introduce themselves.

Discussion on TOR of the Steering Committee

Co-Chair, Ms. Mallick, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP informed those present at the meeting that the project is a Direct Implemented Project, and under this modality the overall management and execution of the project lay with UNDP, and also the responsibility for the day to day management of the project. The Committee was informed that FAO is a major responsible partner to the project with responsibilities for the implementation of several of its components.

She further highlighted that the Project Steering Committee has specific roles and responsibilities and referred members to the section of the Project Document which highlights those roles and responsibilities.

In response to a query on the modality for procurement of goods and services, Ms. Mallick and Ms. Alleyne, Assistant FAO Representative, informed the meeting that UNDP and FAO will be responsible for the procurement of the goods and services using the two agencies procurement guidelines. Both agencies will have to be responsible for the performance of the consultants.

In an effort to ensure transparency and accountability of the project, Ms. Mallick stated that **Minutes** of the Project Steering Committee Meetings **will be produced and** placed on the UNDP Guyana website. Further, we must ensure gender parity exist within the Steering Committee Meetings.

During discussions on the composition of the members of the Project Steering Committee, it was pointed out that considering the inter-linked nature of DRR and CCA, it is important to secure proactive involvement of the Office of Climate Change (OCC), Ministry of Presidency in the project. This decision ***was endorsed by the majority that OCC is to be a permanent member of the Project Steering Committee.*** Ms. Alleyne, stressed that the Co-Chair should ensure active involvement of the Ministry of Communities since they were absent at both the Project Inception workshop and the present Steering Committee Meeting, despite the important role they will be required to play in the Project Implementation. The meeting also agreed to include the Inter American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) as a member on the Project Steering Committee.

The issue of having representatives from the farming communities (beneficiaries, such as farmers, livestock holders and fisher-folk) on the Project Steering Committee to be a part of the decision making process was raised by Ms. Christian, OCC and discussed by the Committee in detail. Mr. Welch of Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA), suggested having representations at the level of national associations for either a period or activities.

Discussions were held with respect to the coverage of their geographical representations and the level of participations (as members or observers).

Dr. Butts highlighted that it was a valid concern to have farmers and livestock associations and fisheries cooperatives as beneficiaries on the committee. Another option was to request the involvement of representatives from the groups where the pilot activities will be located. He then stated that this could promote transparency of the project from the ground level. Two options were put forward to members of the committee for consideration – (i) to have representatives from the farming communities be members of the committee or (ii) to sit as observers on the committee.

Ms. Alleyne suggested having 4 representatives from the 4 pilot communities (to be selected based on the selection criteria), as observers. Major Craig from Civil Defense Commission (CDC) raised the concern of having the beneficiaries as observers and not being able to be a part of decision making body.

The Committee voted to have representatives of farmers (rice crops and cash crops), livestock holders associations and fisher-folk cooperatives sit as observers on the Project Steering Committee.

Actions to be taken: it was agreed that the following agencies will be responsible for appointing representatives from each group:

- Cash Crop – National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (NAREI)
- Rice Crop –Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB)
- Fisheries – Fisheries Department
- Livestock – GLDA

*It was agreed that a letter of invitation will be issued by UNDP.

Frequency of Steering Committee Meetings

Ms. Mallick informed the meeting that based on the TOR for the Steering Committee, meetings are scheduled every 6 months. However, members agreed to have quarterly meetings convened during the early phase of the Project Implementation. They further agreed to revert to the 6-months meeting later in the project.

Discussion on Annual Work Plan 2016

An overview of the activities under each Output was presented by Ms. Alleyne, FAO and Ms. Ohashi, UNDP to the Steering Committee members. The Committee was updated of the current project progress. It was mentioned that TORs for the consultancies under Output 1.1 through Output 3.2 are being prepared to share with FAO Sub-Regional office and HQ and UNDP Regional Office in Panama, respectively.

Major Craig, CDC, informed the meeting that the CDC, the Hydrometeorological Service and the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission possess useful information and documentation to add value to the work of the consultants. It was further pointed out by Major Craig that CDC could provide technical guidance as it relates to the Early Warning Systems under activities related to Output 2.1 and 3.1.

It was also agreed by the members present that the project should aim to implement activities and promote the results of the project during the Agriculture Month in October.

Major Craig indicated that the CDC has volunteers in Regions 4, 6, and 9 and would be prepared to mobilize these volunteers to provide assistance during the project implementation, if the need arises. Concerns were raised with respect to the short time span for the procurement of consultants and the timely implementation of project activities by Ms. Christian, OCC. Ms. Mallick and Ms. Ohashi

suggested that the period of implementation includes considerations of the necessary projected duration of procurement and also the availability of consultants. Additionally, a suggestion was made by Mr. Hanif of GMC, that the proposed AWP 2016 should include a column to capture the current status of each activity.

AWP 2016 and Implementation Work Plan 2016 were both endorsed by the majority of the members, and therefore was approved.

Any Other Business

The majority of the members agreed that the second Steering Committee Meeting should be held during the 1st week of October, 2016. The date and time will be communicated in due course.

Closing remarks

Closing remarks were provided by Ms. Mallick, UNDP who thanked the members of the Steering Committee for attending the meeting and emphasized the importance of each agency working in close collaboration towards the implementation of the project. Dr. Butts in his closing remarks noted that he looks forward to participation of each agency during the project implementation in achieving DRM and DRR mainstreaming in the country's agriculture sector.

Written by Chika Ohashi, Programme Analyst, UNDP

July 5th, 2016

Approved by Dr. Hector Butts, Finance Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Date: _____

Approved by Ms. Shabnam Mallick, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP

Date: _____