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Development Programme



Minutes of Project Board Meeting

Project Title: Transitional Solutions Initiative Joint Programme

Date and Time: 12 December 2013, 09.30 am

Venue: UNDP Marawi Conference Room, Khartoum

In Attendance

Name	Organization	Title
Kal Nielsen – Chair of the Meeting	UNHCR	Country Representative
Hamad Elizouli	COR	Commissioner
Pontus Ohrstedt	UNDP	Team Leader Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit
Manal Omar Ali	MOFNE	Programme Assistance
Sawsan Omer	HICDG	Internal Relations Officer
Mohammed Fisa A	Ministry of Finance	Deputy Manager
Mahgoub Ahmed M. Ali	Ministry of Finance – Gedaref State	Director General
Mohamed Jema	Ministry of Finance - Gedarif State	TSI Focal Point
Bashoer Mohamed	COR Kassala	TSI Focal Point
Masahiro Shiomi	JICA Sudan	Project Formulation Advisor
Pieter Smidt van Gelder	Embassy of the Netherlands	First Secretary
Jurrien D. Norder	Embassy of the Netherlands	Second Secretary
Ingrid Skjolaas	Royal Norwegian Embassy	
Mohamed Qassim	UNHCR	Head of Kassala Sub-Office
Nicolas Brass	UNHCR	External Relations Officer, Khartoum
Mohamed Shoman	UNHCR	Senior Livelihoods Officer, Kassala
Lisa Pattison	UNHCR	Associate External Relations Officer, Kassala
Ahmed Jamal	UNDP	TSI JP Project Manager
Omer Elhag	UNDP	Programme Specialist
Elina Siley	UNDP	Programme Analyst

Not in attendance:

Name	Organization	Title
Sara Sinada	World Bank	Conflict and Social Development Analyst, AFICS
Attendee appointed by Musa Mohamed Osheik (Director General)	Ministry of Finance Economy and Labour Force Kassala	Director General
Bahmatallah Osman	Kassala	Director of Economic Planning

Note: The attendants from Kassala State did not have the possibility to participate due to the annual work planning of the Government. The World Bank had confirmed their participation but did not attend the meeting.

Agenda:

1. Introduction and Opening Remarks
2. 2013 Progress Update
3. 2014 Annual Work Plan (AWP) & Budget
4. Approval of the Revised Board ToR
5. Assessment Update – Closed Camps in Gedaref State
6. Proposal on 'One UNDP/UNHCR TSI Joint Programme

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Summary of the Meeting:

The Meeting was chaired by the UNHCR Country Representative and, for the first time attended by the Commissioner for Refugees who co-chaired the meeting together with representatives from the HCDG and MOFNE. The World Bank was not present at the meeting however, the Board was informed on the recent changes in the Bank's TSI stream which will only include IDPs and host communities in Kassala state, upon direct instructions from the MoF at federal level. The TSI JP Project Manager presented the overall progress of the TSI JP, including financial utilization and the expected balance for 2013. He furthermore presented the work plan for 2014, including budget and funding requirements which showed a large increase under the Basic Services Output as needs has been identified as larger than expected. The UNHCR presented a justification for merging the two TSI streams as well as the impact that would have on the budget and work plan for 2014. With the two merged streams, the expected budget would be around 21,000,000 USD

The Board agreed on three key points: endorsement of the presented work plan, to continue the work of merging the two TSI streams through the drafting of a Harmonization Framework, and establish a Committee that will agree on criteria for the handover of basic services, do continuous assessments and look into whether it would be feasible to include the two closed camps in the TSI. The point of approving the Board ToR was postponed to the next meeting.

The donors highlighted two points regarding the sustainability of the project: 1) Needs are increasing but funds decreasing and that it should be a priority to rather focus the resources on producing results in fewer camps. 2) The question on when a handover of basic services to government entities would be possible should be clarified.

The meeting closed at: 12.00 pm

Decisions and Action Points

Minute	Issue	Decision/Action point	Responsibility	Time Frame
Introduction and Opening Remarks	Participation of the World Bank	More information around the World Bank's involvement with the TSI should be presented, possibly through another high-level stand-alone meeting with the World Bank	Omer ElHag (UNDP) and Ahmed Jamal (UNDP/UNHCR TSI JP Manager)	Next Board meeting
2014 Annual Work Plan and Funding Requirements	Endorsement of the 2014 work plan and budget	The work plan for 2014, including budget, was endorsed	Board	
2014 Annual Work Plan and Funding Requirements	Assessment and evaluation of Phase 1	An assessment committee should be determined and set criteria and standard for transfer of basic services to line ministries	TSI JP Project Manager and Mohamed Shoman, UNHCR	January
One Joint Programme	Endorsement of moving forward with the Harmonization Framework in order to work towards merging of the TSI JP and the UNHCR	The work toward one Programme should continue. The Harmonization Framework will be drafted as a first step. Upon agreement on	Elina Silen, UNDP, Mohammed Shoman, UNHCR	Draft ready by the third week of December

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	specific components	merging the components, further steps will be taken.		
Assessment Update - Closed Camps in Gedaref State	Plan for Assessment of Closed Camps	As per the request from government partners to include the closed camps in Gedaref in the TSI JP, the team will investigate whether it would be possible to include a more detailed assessment of the camps, taking into consideration the feedback from donors on resource focus, mandate and objectives	Ahmed Jemal, TSI Project Manager, Mohammed Qasim UNHCR	By the end of the first quarter of 2014
Closing Remarks	Next Board Meeting	The next Board Meeting will take place as soon as there is clarity on resource commitment (most probably in February)	Omer El Hag, Ahmed Jemal, TSI JP Project Manager	Next Board Meeting

Detailed Minutes: 12/12/2013

1. Introduction and Opening Remarks

The UNHCR Country Representative opened the meeting and extended a special welcome to the Commissioner for Refugees who for the first time attended the TSI JP Board meeting and acted as a Co-Chair. Encouraging remarks were made by the Commissioner who also expressed the profound support of COR to any issue related to the TSI. His positive views were shared by the other Co-Chairs, representatives from the HCDG and MOFNE and the latter expressed the content to not only see the results of 2013, but also to take part in the planning and discussion of the work plan for 2014 and put across that these efforts will be supported by the MOFNE.

It was noted that the World Bank were not present at the meeting and the UNHCR Country Representative briefly informed the Board on the latest updates on the WB TSI stream. The UNDP/UNHCR have recently been informed that the geographical scope and target population of the WB TSI stream will include IDPs and host communities in Kassala state as per Federal Government's guidance for the pilot project. The baseline survey will be conducted in 11 localities and will determine target areas/localities. Refugees will not be part of the target group as earlier planned.

After an introduction of the participants, the members of the Board endorsed the agenda.

2. 2013 Progress Update

The TSI JP Project Manager presented the overall progress of the TSI JP and emphasized how it has only been possible due to the good cooperation between the various stakeholders involved. As for the financial utilization, the original TSI JP budget was estimated at \$12,175,091 USD, of which \$8,196,985 USD was funded. The expected balance for 2013 will be \$1,718,476 USD with an expected carry-over of \$888,522 USD to 2014. Out of these, \$500,000 USD is earmarked for vocational training and \$300,000 USD for staff costs. As for the UNHCR components, the expected balance for 2013, 829,954, is already committed.

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Under the 8 planned output targets, the TSI JP has made large progress contributing to the overall goal of enhancing self-reliance and resilience, working toward local economic recovery and eventually the conversion of camp settlements. The key progress outputs in relation to expected targets included:

Output 1: 519 trainees graduated from vocational training, 430 women trained in food processing/handicraft; 66 trainees received mobile training in tractor maintenance

Output 2: 4,215 students received educational supplies; 14 primary teachers recruited (improving student-teacher ratio from 60:1 to 40:1; 510 people accessing newly constructed latrines; 2,000 people now have access to potable water

Output 3: 30,000 refugees are to be granted work permits in Kassala state through agreement reached with COR & Kassala State Authorities; agreement with COR to develop birth registration programme; authorities trained in external refugee law and sensitized on refugee and human rights law

Output 4: 6,000 farmers received 80MT of seeds and hand tools; 35 para-veterinarians trained and provided with kits and 24,800 animals vaccinated

Output 5: 2,392 beneficiaries (90% women) benefited from microfinance services and business management and financial skills training, 75 Village Saving and Lending Groups established

Output 6: 2,140 people trained on clean energy for domestic cooking; 412,141 seedlings produced and planted

Output 7: 3,000 women trained in conflict resolution, communication and leadership; 19 radio listening cultural groups supported, raising awareness on gender and promoting social cohesion

Output 8: Locality Development Plans (2012-2014) formulated for Girba and Fashaga localities

One of the representatives from the Embassy of the Netherlands asked for a clarification on two questions: the state of the work permits and why the original budget requested was \$12,000,000 USD and only \$6,000,000 USD was spent?

On the first issue, the Senior Livelihoods Officer from UNHCR gave a brief background, explaining how the agreement on the work permits are a product of a close cooperation between UNHCR, COR and the Labor Office in Kassala State. The work permits are to be issued to all refugees from 18-60 years old to allow them to work outside the camp and within the State. The permits have not yet been issued but are foreseen to be within a near future.

With regards to the budget and funding requirements for 2014, the TSI JP Project Manager clarified that the original budget requirement was \$12,000,000 USD and the Programme received \$8,000,000 USD. The actual expenditure so far has been \$6,400,000 USD. However, the remaining balance for the UNHCR components is already contracted and activities are ongoing for construction of health facilities and schools. The balance, including the \$800,000 USD carry-over for the UNDP components will be utilized by March 2014. This sum is already earmarked for construction of vocational training centers and staff costs.

The Commissioner expressed his happiness to see the good cooperation between all partners including COR and local government partners. He hoped that this cooperation would continue. He also raised a concern regarding the budget and asked why the planned budget was \$12,000,000 USD but only \$8,000,000 USD was funded? Secondly, he raised a concern that there are reports from the field saying that there is not sufficient focus on the environment in the camps. He also commented on that the World Bank was now out of the TSI picture and asked why and what this would entail for the overall TSI.

The UNHCR Country Representative stated that the World Bank had promised to attend the Board meeting. The recent information from their side was very shocking and he expressed his concern that the WB was not present to explain the matter further. However, the changed scope of the project seems to be based on direct instructions from the MoF at the

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federal level. The Commissioner requested if there was anything in writing regarding to the matter but there is not according to the attendants of the Board meeting.

The Team Leader for the CPR Unit at UNDP explained that the TSI JP's total budget for 3 years is actually around \$ 41,000,000 USD. This means that the approximate budget for one year is around \$12,000,000 USD. As the start of the project as well as the start of the year has been slow in terms of delivery, the expenditure has been lower than expected. However, by next year, we are expecting to be able to deliver according to the full initial plan. However, it is still dependent on resource availability.

TSI JP Project Manager commented on the environment activities in the camp and stated that for 2014, there is \$1,000,000 USD allocated for environment and energy conservation. There is a good plan in place with a significant focus on seedling plantation and energy distribution.

The participant from HCDG raised the importance of the TSI JP working with both refugees and host communities in order to ensure coexistence. She asked for a clarification on how many of the target groups are host communities and how many are refugees and underlined the importance of finding the right balance within this. TSI JP Project Manager answered that this an issue that has been raised by MoI before and that he did agree that it is important to maintain the overall balance. Currently, the target group for the three camps is 162,000 and out of these, 25,000 are refugees and the rest are host communities.

A representative from the Embassy of the Netherlands raised the point of the World Bank being out of the picture and asked if it was possible to elaborate a bit more on what will happen now, if there are any particular steps to be made and so forth.

The UNHCR Country Representative stated that he was not able to speak on the behalf on the World Bank but that they cannot of course operate without full endorsement. Their main counterpart is the host government. However, it is important to keep in mind that the TSI is a global project and that the change of the target population therefore represents a major shift.

The Commissioner mentioned that in some of the initial meetings in the beginning of the year, it was decided that the Board, UNHCR, UNDP and government partners would make a committee that would carry out an assessment and evaluation of the project progress for handover of basic services and then, the timeline set for handover of basic services. The UNHCR Country Representative stated the he had recently met with the State Minister where it was expressed that the basic services could not be handed over until the evaluation had been done, based on the team findings of the evaluation.

The Commissioner stated that he agreed with this and that both the MoI and COR agreed that the basic services component of the project has to be seen as only one component. Therefore, the shift of the hand-over should not be done right away but there has to be an assessment first. He stated that the idea of the TSI is that it should first be expanded, first to 2016, then to 2020 and assessments should be made after all activities.

The representative from the Embassy of the Netherlands stated that as a donor, a very important point is that the project is sustainable. He therefore asked the Commissioner when he would foresee that a hand-over could take place?

The Commissioner said that this will depend on the results and the recommendations of the assessment committee. If they find that all rehabilitation has been done and that all activities are ready, then a hand-over can be made. There needs to be something tangible on the ground, but in principle here is no objection from COR's side. It is high time for a hand-over but it cannot be made immediately and we should not ignore other components. Also, when other camps have been handed over this was not worked. They have completely collapsed.

The UNHCR Country Representative asked the Commissioner who should be the participants of this committee and if it would be possible to do this assessment in January? The Commissioner answered that COR is ready and that the participants could be determined at the end of the meeting and he expressed his agreement to the committee and

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suggested that certain criteria should be set on when the locations would be ready for the hand-over and that ongoing assessment could then be made to oversee when these criteria is met. This could then not only be seen as an assessment but be somewhat of a backbone throughout the project.

The Commissioner asked to have a pilot project – to first shift one camp and then if it is successful, to shift other camps. The MoF expressed their agreement with COR, and that sustainability needs to be considered already in the planning phase. Many camps have been handed over and then collapsed. The TSI JP Project Manager agreed to see and emphasized that the current planning exercise for 2014 has involved line ministries from the beginning, also when it comes to the hand-over of basic services. The TSI JP therefore ensures that the line ministries are involved in planning, implementing, upgrading and managing. The recommendation from COR is well taken and we will work together with the field team to come up with criteria. The Commissioner underlined that the criteria must be developed jointly.

3. 2014 Annual Work Plan and Funding Requirements

The TSI JP Project Manager explained the process behind the 2014 Annual Work plan and how it has been a very participatory process where both refugees, government partner including COR have been a part of the process in order to own the content of the plan. Within the process, a large need for basic services has been identified and includes driving up standards. Education is a major challenge. Through this process, all priorities have been captured in the plan.

The TSI JP Project Manager presented the work plan and funding requirements, The UNHCR Country Representative stated that the work plan and budget was now up to the Board to endorse. The TSI JP Project Manager was asked to elaborate on the time plan and phases of the joint programme. He said that according to the current project document, the 3 camps are separate. However, there is still a need to merge the two streams into one. In addition, there needs to be an evaluation at the end of phase 1 to see if we have reached the goal as stated in the project document. The Team Leader for the CPR Unit at UNDP stated that this was always designed to be a 3-year programme, knowing that this might spill over 3 years. It is unlikely to say that we will be finalizing phase I by the end of 2014, however the programme will still go for three years. Towards the board meeting in the next mid-year, we should consider extending for at least one more year, the current project timeframe. We might want to link it with the mid-term evaluation but I flag already that we might have to extend.

The representative from MOFNE asked regarding 2014 key priorities, in particular around protection and how the work with continued advocacy for work permits would unfold. What are the mechanisms used? How can those holding the permits be held accountable?

The Senior Livelihoods Officer at UNHCR said that they, in close cooperation with COR, implement a full package to make sure that they have the whole package of needed documentation. Regarding understanding the refugee laws, to comply with the laws etc. for those who violate, the GoS will safeguard against these issues. The Commissioner stated that the picture is clear in the agreement made and that the agreement contains many points which outline the responsibility and accountability for the refugees.

The Commissioner stated that according to his information, in several meetings, the Godaref state has emphasized on the closed camps.

The Team Leader for the CPR Unit at UNDP mentioned that the complete work plan for 3 camps sits at \$15,800,000 USD as per the original project document. Now we have a proposal on the table to incorporate or link the JP to the two additional camps. This would raise the budget to approximately \$21,000,000 USD. However, one concern that we are having is that we currently have a very limited funding. So, what the board could do at this stage is to endorse the work plan but with the understanding that we currently don't have the financial resources to implement. As we secure funding, there might be a process of prioritizing within the work plan.

The representative from MOFNE asked if the \$2,000,000 USD carry-over is included within the \$15,000,000 USD which it was.

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4. One Joint Programme

The Senior Livelihoods Officer at UNHCR presented the justification for the merging of the UNHCR-specific components with the TSI JP. The presentation included reflections on the background on the overall TSI as well as an overlook of some of the overall achievements made so far within the two camps which have include progress within basic services and livelihoods. The main justification for margining the two streams is to ensure progress at the development front and continue the efforts for camp conversion. The two streams are currently running simultaneously and as the components in the streams are matching a merge would give clarity and operational efficiency. In addition, there is a strong interest by local authorities for a unified approach which in addition would maximize the use of comparative advantages. Implications of One Joint Programme would include an increased acceptance by local authorities, an accelerated impact due to increased synergy and an increased TSI JP annual budge where also operational needs for additional areas would have to be covered.

In order to work towards One Joint Programme, an outline of a so-called Harmonization Framework was presented. This framework will contain: 1) Background covering the streams, 2) Common TSI goals/development objectives, 3) Results framework, 4) Implementation modalities and coordination arrangements, 5) Reporting and communication, 6) Coordinated funding mechanism, 7) The endorsement of all TSI stakeholders.

The representative from the Royal Embassy of Norway asked why the One Joint Programme and the Harmonization Framework did not include the World Bank whereupon the UNHCR Country Representative once again explained the latest development around the WB stream.

5. Assessment Update - Closed Camps in Gedaref State

The Head of the UNHCR sub-office in Kassala presented the background on the closed camps in Gedaref state. Representatives from Gedaref State want to engage UNDP and UNHCR to support these camps. As a result, it was previously decided to work on assessing these 2 camps. The UNHCR has worked on consolidating camps for many years. Initially, the UNHCR was supporting 26 camps which are now down to 9 camps. These camps have been handed over to the state authorities. As for the closed camps in Gedaref state, the camps were handed over to the state authorizes and the assessment of these basic services has been reassigned and this needs assistance and upgrading. There have been discussions on how to potentially work with these closed camps as it has been requested by Gedaref state and to take up on the camps to include them in the 2014 work plan, has been one suggestion.

The TSI JP Project Manager raised the issue that it needs to be considered what is actually feasible to include within the existing framework of the TSI JP. The current topic on the table is to merge the two streams of the TSI JP. To also add the closed camps would be additional point. If we are to include another closed camp, it might dilute our momentum on the ground and what we have started. With the team of the ground, we are already planning to include two more camps. We have to be realistic. The Commissioner stated that it is high time to include the closed camps.

The Gedaref state extended his appreciation to the TSI, the UNHCR and UNDP for the work well done in Gedaref but called for more attention to the closed camps and to be included in the TSI as of 2014. He also stated that there is a need to extend services to all areas of the State not only the camps and its host communities.

The representative from the Royal Norwegian Embassy asked that the lessons learned from these closed camps are? She also added that overall resources are important to consider when these decisions are made. As a donor, it is important that the Programme is focused on delivering progress in the initial camps.

The Team Leader for the CPR Unit at UNDP stated that there is a specific guidance on the joint programme which includes an overarching strategy and the types of work to do under that. There is a potential to adjust the scope within that agreement, in this case in respect to geographic coverage. This would also entail to revise the budget to reflect the needed resources. If there is consideration of a different approach, that needs to be discussed would have to be reflected as well and we would proceed on that basis. Then we can also reflect it in the annual work plan. We could do a new project document and decide to share it outside.



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Practically; adding the two open camps would give an additional budget estimate for \$7,000,000 USD. That would mean that the overall budget would go from \$41,000,000 USD to \$56,000,000 USD. Within this scope, the closed camps are not yet included so for that both additional activities and resources would need to be added. As is the situation for this year, we are already struggling to meet the resource needs for the three camps and we need to be a bit careful with any expectation we would generate. We could however express an intention to try and include this work for example by stating that we will pursue activities in the closed camps but that they would mainly be related to identifying lessons learned.

The representative from the Embassy of the Netherlands, as a quick follow-up: TSI is currently working with 3 camps, suggesting to expand with another 2 and then potentially with another 2-4 (closed camps?). The Team Leader for the CPR Unit commented that we are not really sure about the closed camps. But if the Board agrees, we could task a team to prepare a more detailed assessment for planning for the closed camps. The Senior Livelihoods Officer for UNHCR commented that the 3 TSI JP and 2 UNHCR-specific camps are already included in the TSI. The Head of the UNHCR Sub-Office in Kassala added that it is important to remember that the closed camps are not at the same level as the JP camps.

The representative from the Royal Norwegian Embassy commented that from a donor perspective; we fully realized the needs in Sudan and the fact that needs are increasing whilst funds are decreasing. The TSI JP has largely been supported as it is trying to find a new solution to these problems. Therefore, it should be a priority to rather focus the resources on producing results in fewer camps. This may also attract funding in the future. Therefore, focus your resources is the advice from Norway. The representative from the Embassy of the Netherlands stated that he completely agreed with Norway on this point.

The TSI JP Project Manager asked if the closed camps should even be addressed through the TSI or whether they are outside of the mandate.

The Team Leader for the CPR Unit commented that the Board will most probably reconvene in some shape for early next year as soon as the TSI has a clear view of the resource pictures. With the current funding, it is not possible to expand so much. So far, if a work plan is improved for the 3 camps, and the continuation of the harmonization of the two streams, we could aim to go to the end of the first of second quarter to make an assessment of the closed camps and what approaches would be relevant for those areas.

The UNHCR Country Representative asked the Board if they agreed on these three points and the answer was a yes. As soon as there is a clearer resource commitment, there will be another Board meeting.

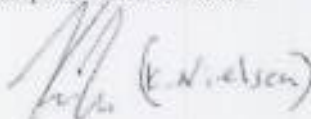
6. Approval of the Revised Board ToR

The representative from the Royal Norwegian Embassy conveyed that the donors have made some joint comments on the revised Board TOR but that they have unfortunately not been able to get the final approval from the Headquarters yet. The representative from the Embassy of the Netherlands confirmed that the comments had been approved from their side. On that note, the donors' comments will be shared electronically as soon as they have been approved. The incorporated comments could then be approved at the next Board Meeting.

Closing Remarks were expressed by the Chair and the Co-chairs who thanked the participants of the meeting.

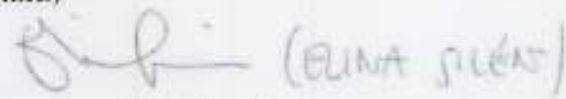
There being no other business the meeting closed at: 12.00 pm

Chairperson: SIGNATURE

 (K. Nielsen)

20/01/14

Secretary: SIGNATURE (Project manager or Programme Officer)

 (EUNA SLEAS)

22/01/14