

MINUTES

7th Steering Committee Meeting

“Livelihood Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-border Areas (LITACA)” project

Date: November 24, 2017

Venue: UNDP Conference Hall

Participants:

LITACA Steering Committee Members:

1. Mr. Tojiddin Jurazoda, Deputy Minister, MEDT TJK;
2. Mr. Mukhtar Ghafarzoy, Senior Advisor to the Minister, MRRD AFG;
3. Mr. Hajime Kitaoka, H.E. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Tajikistan;
4. Mr. Hideki Tanabe, Chief Representative, JICA Tajikistan Office;
5. Ms. Pratibha Mehta, UN Resident Coordinator / UNDP Resident Representative in Tajikistan;
6. Mr. Jan Harfst, UNDP Tajikistan Country Director.

Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) of the Republic of Tajikistan:

7. Mr. Sultonsho Homidov, Head of Department Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) of the Republic of Tajikistan

State Executive Body of Khatlon Province of the Republic of Tajikistan:

8. Mr. Rajabali Rajabov, Deputy Governor of Khatlon Province
9. Mr. Davlatkhuja Mirzoev, State Executive Body of Khatlon Province of the Republic of Tajikistan

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development of Afghanistan:

10. Mr. Roshan Safi, LITACA Project Manager, MRRD Afghanistan.

JICA HQ / Afghanistan / Tajikistan:

11. Mr. Kazunori Miyasaka, South Asia Department, JICA HQ Tokyo Office;
12. Mr. Takeshi Watanabe, Chief Representative, JICA Afghanistan Office;
13. Mr. Jun Moriguchi, Representative, JICA Afghanistan Office;
14. Mr. Yohei Ishiguro, Project Formulation Advisor, JICA Afghanistan Office;
15. Mr. Haroon Khawar, Programme Manager, JICA Afghanistan Office;
16. Ms. Naoko Nishikawa, Project Formulation Advisor, JICA Tajikistan Office;
17. Mr. Shokirjon Mahmudov, Program Officer, JICA Tajikistan Office.

UNDP Afghanistan / Tajikistan:

18. Ms. Laura Rio, UNDP Afghanistan, Head of Unit, Livelihoods and Resilience, UNDP Afghanistan;
19. Ms. Sanja Bojanic, Deputy Country Director, UNDP Tajikistan;
20. Mr. Mubin Rustamov, ARR/Programme, UNDP Tajikistan;
21. Ms. Zebo Jalilova, Programme Analyst, UNDP Tajikistan;
22. Ms. Nargis Djuraeva, Programme Associate, UNDP Tajikistan;
23. Mr. Khurshed Kholov, Programme Manager, EEP;
24. Mr. Jamshed Vazirov, Technology Transfer Project Manager, EEP;
25. Mr. Firdavs Faizulloev, Programme Manager, DRMP;
26. Mr. Michihiro Tanabe, DRMP Programme Analyst;
27. Mr. Firuz Khamidov, Programme Manager, UNDP Communities Programme (CP), Tajikistan;
28. Mr. Jurabek Sattorov, Senior Local Governance Officer, UNDP CP;
29. Mr. Firuz Saidkhojaev, Senior Economic Development Officer, UNDP CP;

30. Ms. Zarina Juraeva, M&E Specialist, UNDP CP;
31. Ms. Tahmina Rozikova, Communication and Partnership Specialist, UNDP CP (minutes taker);
32. Mr. Mirzo Olimov, Project Coordinator, Planning Team, UNDP CP
33. Mr. Parviz Akramov, National Coordinator, Aid for Trade Project, UNDP CP;
34. Mr. Ruslan Ziganshin, LITACA Project Manager, UNDP CP;
35. Mr. Abdullo Guliev, Area Manager, Kulyab Area Office;
36. Ms. Sojidamo Tagaeva, Local Economic Specialist, Kulyab Area Office;
37. Mr. Khiloldin Sobitov, Local Governance Specialist, Kulyab Area Office;
38. Mr. Abdulghani Ibrohimov, Area Manager, Shaartuz Area Office;
39. Mr. Farkhod Shodiev, Local Governance Specialist, Shaartuz Area Office (minutes taker).

Agenda

The Steering Committee was devoted to discussion and semiannual review of LITACA activities in both countries:

1. Welcoming speeches
 - Ms. Pratibha Mehta, UN Resident Coordinator / UNDP Resident Representative in Tajikistan.
 - Mr. Tojiddin Jurazoda, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) of the Republic of Tajikistan;
 - Mr. Mukhtar Ghafarzoy, Senior Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan;
 - Mr. Hajime Kitaoka, H.E. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Republic of Tajikistan;
 - Mr. Hideki Tanabe, Chief Representative, JICA Tajikistan Office
2. “Reporting on implementation of recommendations of the 6th LITACA Project Steering Committee held in July 2016”. Presenter: Mr. Firuz Khamidov, UNDP Communities Programme (CP) Manager, Tajikistan
3. “LITACA project results, challenges faced and ways forward”: Followed by Q&A. Presenters:
 - Mr. Ruslan Ziganshin, LITACA Project Manager, UNDP CP Tajikistan;
 - Mr. Roshan Safi, LITACA Project Manager, MRRD Afghanistan.
4. “LITACA Project Final Evaluation: Key findings, conclusions and recommendations” Presenter: Mr. Jovidsho Juraev, Independent Project Evaluation Consultant.
5. “LITACA Project Atlas Publication”: Presenter: Ms. Tahmina Rozikova, Communication and Partnership Specialist, UNDP CP, Tajikistan
6. Closing remarks, field visit to LITACA project sites feedback and conclusions, endorsements and recommendations obtained from LITACA Project Steering Committee members.

Minutes

1. Welcome speeches:

Ms. Pratibha Mehta, UN Resident Coordinator / UNDP Resident Representative in Tajikistan

Welcomed all participants and emphasized that thanks to the effective cooperation of all stakeholders, including Ebsp of Khatlon Oblast and the MEDT the project goals were successfully achieved. However, collaboration should continue because it has tremendous possibility for socio-economic development and cross-border

cooperation. She expressed the deep appreciation to Government of Japan for their support, to JICA for their leadership, Governments of Afghanistan and Tajikistan for effective cooperation.

Mr. Mr. Tojiddin Jurazoda, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) of the Republic of Tajikistan

Welcomed the members and expressed gratitude for the implementation of the project on high level quality. He noted that identified needs of 8 target districts and provided technical and financial support made it possible to address the range of priorities in socio-economic development and cross-border cooperation.

Mr. Mukhtar Ghafarzoy, Senior Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan;

Welcomed all participants and expressed his excuse for not coming to Tajikistan, but expressed his pleasure to be connected via Skype and present MRRD in the SC. He expressed gratitude to the Government of Japan and JICA for the substantial support, to the Government of Tajikistan and UNDP Tajikistan for a such effective cooperation. He noted that the President of Afghanistan highly appreciated the impacts of the LITACA project and its wonderful initiatives. He shared some key messages of the President of Afghanistan and the Minister of MRRD to the SC participants:

- ✓ LITACA is a good example in strengthening stability, increasing rural livelihood and income generation initiative and should be expanded to the other provinces and districts, particularly other cross-border districts.
- ✓ LITACA should be strengthen by merging its initiatives and the National development program (Citizens' Charter National Priority Program of Afghanistan);

Mr. Hajime Kitaoka, H.E. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Republic of Tajikistan
Greeted and expressed his gratitude to the SC members. He mentioned that remember the 6th SC meeting and was looking forward the current meeting to discuss raised issues. He noted that Japan gives attention to cross-border cooperation, its security and trade, that's why Japan tries to support initiatives in cross-border districts in different areas though different agencies. He underlined that LITACA is addressing multiple border challenges and helps to bridge existing gaps between the requirement of security and the demand for "open" borders.

Mr. Hideki Tanabe, Chief Representative, JICA Tajikistan Office

Welcomed all participants. He expressed gratitude for the arrangements of the recent visit to south Khatlon region. He pointed out the importance of collaboration not only with the Government of Tajikistan, but also with development partners. He emphasized that the project is very important for the cross-border cooperation.

Presentations

1. Mr. Firuz Khamidov, UNDP Communities Programme (CP) Manager, Tajikistan reported on implementation of recommendations of the 6th LITACA Project Steering Committee held in July 2016:

- Independent evaluation and audit of the project were conducted and the final report will be provided in the mid of December 2017.*
- Non-cost extension of the project of the project till December 2017*
- New concept note was developed and submitted in April, Project proposal was submitted in August 2017*

In early of November 2017 Government of Japan approved Phase II of LITACA project and singing ceremony is planning in late November 2017.

2. *Mr. Ruslan Ziganshin, LITACA Project Manager and Mr. Roshan Safi, LITACA Project Manager, MRRD Afghanistan presented the LITACA project results, challenges faced and ways forward. (presentations are attached). Followed by Q&A*

Q&A

Comment 1: Mr. Hajime Kitaoka asked: Cross-border situation is complicated and how the project is going to achieve Output 2. – cross-border economic cooperation?

Reply: Mr. Roshan Safi mentioned that thanks to experience gained from LITACA the administrative barriers are improving. However, our beneficiaries are trying to make their preparation in advance to make it possible to do cross-border business or take a part in some trade fairs.

Reply: Mr. Ziganshin replied that in Phase II we have more opportunities for cross-border cooperation, using our OVOP products. Moreover, it would be good to discuss the cross-border development issues together with related government agencies and development partners.

Comment 2: Mr. Hideki Tanabe noted that cross-border cooperation is very important and recommended to give more attention to this output, including cooperation with other projects that works in this field like BOMNAF and others.

Comment 3: Ms. Pratibha Mehta said about the importance of dialogue between Governments on this issue for opening the border keeping security situation.

3. *Mr. Jovidsho Juraev, Independent Project Evaluation Consultant presented the LITACA Project Final Evaluation: Key findings, conclusions and recommendations (presentations are attached). Followed by Q&A*

Q&A

Comment 1: Mr. Ruslan Ziganshin and Mr. Roshan Safi noted that in LITACA II the budget is more oriented to cross-border cooperation, income-generation and job-creation activities.

Comment 2: Mr. Haroon Khawar asked about the role of DRMP in cross-border project.

Reply: Mr. Firdavs Faizulloev (Programme Manager, DRMP) mentioned that prevention of the seasonal disaster risks (mainly floods) are important since they can destroy the socio-economic achievements of the project. As for the Project document, the activities of DRMP were planned in both sides of border, but due to the security situation in the Afghanistan all activities were not fully implemented and the alternative option (separate activities in each country) was found, agreed with Afghan colleagues and implemented.

4. *Ms. Tahmina Rozikova, Communication and Partnership Specialist of UNDP CP (Tajikistan) presented LITACA Project Atlas Publication.*

Concluding remarks:

Mr. Takeshi Watanabe noted out that in future LITACA II should be more focused on cross-border cooperation opportunities that's make the project so unique.

Ms. Laura Rio expressed her gratitude for donor's support, Government of Afghanistan and Tajikistan and implementing agencies. It was noted LITACA I is operational closed and team will start LITACA II from January 2018.

Mr. Mukhtar Ghafarzoy expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government of Japan for support, colleagues of JICA and UNDP of both country, Government of Tajikistan for wonderful cooperation. He mentioned the progress made in socio-economic development of rural population of cross-border districts that MRRD appreciates.

Mr. Rajabali Rajabov expressed gratitude to Government of Japan, UNDP and other stakeholders on behalf of EBSF of Khatlon Oblast, people of 8 cross-border districts and himself. Replication of OVOP concept will make it possible to produce certain products and services, create more jobs. Every created job means improvement of livelihood of the one household or 6 people. Moreover, this concept will contribute to the implementation of the national strategies.

Mr. Sultonsho Homidov requested to expand the project areas in both sides and include, if possible, Sudg Oblast and GBAO. He also mentioned that MEDT RT is always open for cooperation with Japan and UNDP and fully supports the project implementation.