



MINUTES

Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting

for the projects “Facilitating Climate Resilience in Tajikistan” and
“Building Climate Resilience in Agriculture and Water Sectors of Rural Tajikistan”
funded by the Government of the Russian Federation

Date: 16 December 2021

Time: 14:00-16:30

Venue: UNDP Tajikistan premises, 39 Ayni street, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Project Steering Committee (PSC) Members:

Mr. Christophoros Politis, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Tajikistan- Chairperson

Mr. Shamil Shamsutdinov, Charge d’affaires of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Tajikistan

Ms. Jamilya Baydulloeva, Deputy Director of the Agency for Hydrometeorology under the Committee of Environmental Protection of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan

Participants:

1. Mr. Oleg Ilyshev, First Secretary, Embassy of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Tajikistan
2. Mr. Khairullo Bobozoda, Chairman of the Local Executive Body of State Power in Kuhistoni Mastchoh District
3. Mr. Abdujabbor Homidov, Director of Public Organization “Innovation and participation for development”
4. Ms. Nizomatmo Sharifova, Leader of women-beekeepers’ groups, Kuhistoni Mastchoh District
5. Ms. Hafisa Uljaeva, Leader of women-farmers group, Urmetan Jamoat, Ayni District
6. Ms. Muhayo Niyozova, Leader of women beekeepers’ group, Dargh village, Ayni District
7. Mr. Khujamahmad Azizov, Chairman of Dehkan Farm “Veshkand”, Ayni District
8. Mr. Shuhrat Abdulloev, Finance Consultant
9. Ms. Malika Khakimova, Program Associate for cluster Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction, Energy and Environment, UNDP Tajikistan
10. Mr. Firdavs Faizulloev, Programme Manager, UNDP DRMP
11. Ms. Zumrat Normatova, Project Analyst, UNDP DRMP

Agenda:

1. Opening remarks
2. Presentation of results of “Facilitating Climate Resilience in Tajikistan” project

3. Presentation of “Building Climate Resilience in Agriculture and Water sectors in Rural Tajikistan” project results in 2021
4. Presentation of the Annual work plan for 2021 of the “Building Climate Resilience in Agriculture and Water sectors in Rural Tajikistan”
5. Discussion, decisions

Proceedings:

Mr. Christophoros Politis, Deputy Resident Representative welcomed the meeting attendees and thanked the Embassy of Russian Federation for funding and strategic support provided by the Government of Russian Federation for sustainable and resilient development of Tajikistan and especially for projects attracting funds for climate adaptation and resilience that is not natural investment area for many but is an important building block in the sustainable development. He highlighted that projects are already working on addressing comment regarding improving communication with communities and wider audience on highlighting the results the projects achieved. He expressed appreciation to the Agency for Hydrometeorology of the Committee of Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for the longstanding partnership and collaboration resulted in managing problems that are close to the lives and livelihood of people in the rural areas. Mr. Christophoros Politis emphasized participation of the project beneficiaries from the target districts in the Steering Committee which bring life testimonies on how project has changed the way on looking at climate resilient and agriculture sector in these pilot districts. At the end he mentioned that FCRT project will be finalized and BCRAW project expects that Project Steering Committee will consider the request and justification of for no-cost extension for 6 months period.

Mr. Shamil Shamsutdinov, Charge d'affaires of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Tajikistan thanked UNDP in Tajikistan for fruitful cooperation and underlined that UNDP is the main development partner of the Russia in Tajikistan. These two projects with total amount of 1.7mln US Dollars that aimed to strengthen the capacity of Tajikistan to deal with climate change have showed significant result in their directions. The monitoring mission carried out in October 2021 by the Russian Embassy representatives revealed positive progress the BCRAW project had in the target villages and successful implementation of the beekeeping and fruit drying practices. Mr. Shamsutdinov expressed that the Russian Embassy expects the final report of the FCRT project that ends this year. He mentioned that the Government of the Russian Federation is also funding three projects of the UNDP in Tajikistan on socio-economic development and these all projects are part of the multidimensional cooperation and development plan for the Republic of Tajikistan.

Ms. Jamilya Baydulloeva, Deputy Director of the Agency for Hydrometeorology greeted all meeting attendees and expressed gratitude on behalf of the Chairwoman of the Committee of Environmental Protection the Russian Federation Government – a strategic partner of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and UNDP in Tajikistan for the continues support on climate change adaptation and activities directed towards achievement of the national strategic plans of Tajikistan. She mentioned that Agency closely works with UNDP and thanked for the technical support it provided in the process of the accreditation in Green Climate Fund.

Mr. Khairullo Bobozoda, Chairman of the Kuhistoni Mastchoh District expressed gratitude to the UNDP in Tajikistan for invitation to the Project Steering Committee Meeting of the “Building Climate Resilience in Agriculture and Water Sectors of Rural Tajikistan” project that is covering 6 villages of the Kuhistoni Mastchoh District. He thanked the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for their constant attention and support to the mountainous villages. Mr. Bobozoda informed that project made significant contribution into implementation of the socio-economic development plan of the district, particularly by the support of women from the vulnerable households with introduction of the beekeeping, provision of seedlings and rehabilitation of the irrigation infrastructure to create new orchards in unused lands etc. and requested to consider expansion of the project target area in Kuhistoni Mastchoh District and include Ivan Tojik jamoat and its villages into list of project’s target area. He also requested the Project steering Committee to consider value adding to the beekeeping activity the project

supported through setting up of a small honey packaging enterprise in Kuhistoni Mastchoh District, where the beekeepers have produced about 60 tons of honey in 2021.

Mr. Firdavs Faizulloev, Programme Manager, Disaster Risk Management Programme (DRMP), UNDP presented the overall results of the project “Facilitating Climate Resilience in Tajikistan” throughout the implementation period since 2018. Mr. Faizulloev reported that project succeeded in attracting funds equal to US\$ 67 mln. to climate projects, showing \$175 return on every US \$1 invested: the project “Integrated landscape approach to enhancing the climate resilience of small-scale farmers and pastoralists in Tajikistan” approved by the Adaptation Fund with budget US\$9.9 mln., the project “Ensuring an effective process for developing a National Adaptation Plan (NAP) for Tajikistan” approved by the Green Climate Fund with budget US\$3 mln., the project «Improving water management in Khatlon region» approved by the Islamic Bank for Development with budget US\$ 52 mln., the project concept “Conservation and sustainable management of high-value arid ecosystems in the lower Amu Darya basin” supported by the Global Ecological Fund with budget US\$3 mln. It was highlighted that FCRT project also supported the Committee for Environmental Protection in accreditation in Green Climate Fund and developing a project proposal “Green, Resilient Recovery in Energy and Agriculture sectors in Tajikistan” to be submitted to GCF. The project established cooperation with the Russian Federation experts and institutions and has synergized and cooperated with the Russian Federation funded project, being implemented by UNDP Regional Hub in Istanbul. It also engaged Russian expertise in capacity building interventions on climate change. Currently the project is implementing the Feasibility study of weather index insurance in Tajikistan and assessment of the cost and benefits of the climate change adaption in Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management sectors of Tajikistan. The results of these studies will be provided to the relevant government agencies for feeding into NPA. Mr. Faizulloev listed the barriers the project had faced in 2021 such as frequent changes of Committee of Environmental Protection leadership and COVID-19 related international flights restrictions that impacted to project implementation. It was mentioned that current funds utilization rate is 94% but by end of December it is expected to fully commit the funds. Actual disbursement of funds under the following recently signed agreements falls beyond the operational end date of the project, namely: Feasibility Study of Weather Index Insurance for Tajikistan, Assessment of the Cost and Benefits of Climate Change Adaptation in Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management Sectors of Tajikistan, Upscaling of nature-based solutions and Final project evaluation.

Ms. Zumrat Normatova, Project Analyst, Disaster Risk Reduction Programme, UNDP presented the implementation progress achieved in 2021 under “Building Climate Resilience in Agriculture and Water Sectors of Rural Tajikistan” (BCRAW) project. Ms. Normatova reported on the results of the beekeeping and fruit processing initiatives that were introduced and expanded during the reporting year. Engagement of the Russian experts that helped to build the capacity of women was highlighted. Throughout these initiatives 151 households got alternative source of income that made them less dependant from mono-crop production income. She mentioned that the integrated micro-watershed rehabilitation approach introduced by the project in the 4 piloted sites helped to demonstrate low-cost and comprehensive way of reducing risk of disaster and benefitted more than 5500 people. The provided seedlings in line with Eco-DRR helped to renovate as well as create new orchards in abandoned 28.5 ha land; 5 infrastructure projects were implemented, which benefitted 5861 people and ensured stable water supply to 68 ha of agriculture land. The project facilitated access of the farmers of Zeravshan Valley to the green credits such as the credit products providing within the GEF project by establishing cooperation with the OJSC Bank Eshkhat and CJSC Bank Arvand. As the result 53 farmers were provided with the required consultative support to identify their needs and select appropriate credit product and apply. It was noted that the project succeeded in establishing cooperation and engagement of the Russian experts from Ryazan Agrotechnological University named after P.A. Kostychev to consult and strengthen local beekeeping capacity. Ms. Normatova mentioned the barriers the project faced such as travel restrictions due Covid-19 pandemic that postponed the planned study tour to the Russian Federation and unstable contact with a representative of the All-Russian Research Institute of Hydraulic Engineering and Land Reclamation named after A.N Kostyukov regarding a case study and developing recommendations at the strategic level.

Further on Ms. Zumrat Normatova, presented annual work plan for 2022 of the “Building Climate Resilience in Agriculture and Water Sectors of Rural Tajikistan” project. She informed the Project Steering Committee members and guests about project budget balance and the request the project on no-cost extension until September 2021 because of following challenges the project faced: delay and postpone of some project activities due to Covid 19 and its waves, dependence of project actions on the agricultural season and short agricultural period in Kuhistoni Mastchoh (late arrival of spring and early arrival of cold weather). The 6 months period of no-cost extension will help to improve the effectiveness of the practices and actions implemented by the project, to obtain more data dependent on the agricultural season, to evaluate the results and, on their basis, develop the visual and other information materials and disseminate through available Internet and traditional resources, to develop and dissemination the project lessons learned as well as recommendation to national level.

Discussions:

Mr. Christophoros Politis affirmed the importance of the projects’ harmony with the districts’ social-economic development plans as well as support in value adding to ensure the quality and sustainability of the initiatives the project introduced in the ground. He made a recommendation to the BCRAW project to connect with the quality test laboratory that is supported by UNDP project in Khujand on testing and certification of the honey.

Mr. Shamsutdinov thanked presenters for the results and information they presented. He expressed gratitude to UNDP for the fact that the allocated funds and support of the Russia had been directed accordingly and reached those who were in great need.

Mr. Ilyshev informed that Russian Embassy’s monitoring visit to Zeravshan Valley in October 2021 confirmed the project results in the ground. He also noted that the Russian Embassy will provide required support to speed-up the negotiation process with the All-Russian Research Institute of Hydraulic Engineering and Land Reclamation named after A.N Kostyukov regarding a case study the project plans. Mr. Ilyshev also recommended project to submit official request for no-cost extension.

Ms. Hafisa Uljaeva, thanked the project and the donor organization for support they provided to women in Ayni District. She informed that fruit and vegetable methods of drying the project has trained helped them, improved the quality of their product and consequently the selling price.

Ms. Nizomatmo Sharifova, expressed gratitude of the women of Kuhistoni Mastchoh district for the support on starting beekeeping which helped them to improve their livelihood. She informed meeting attendees that women get from 40 to 200 kg of honey which is good yield considering that some of the households had no money to buy the honey.

Mr. Hujamahmad Azizov, answering to the question regarding the status of the works on installation of the new pipeline (816 meters) the project provided to rehabilitate the irrigation line Madm-Veshkand informed that works completed and passed gratitude of Veshkand inhabitants to Russian Embassy and UNDP for this support they provided as well as for the works the project supported to reduce risk of mudflow in microwatershed.

Ms. Jamilya Baydulloeva commented the importance of targeting the women and venerable households in the remote villages.

Conclusions:

Mr. Politis expressed appreciation to participants for testimonies of how projects have impacted the lives of people in the target area. He noted that covid-19 impacted the projects and if such risks will remain, the project needs to build strong risk management and improve planning.

Mr. Shamsutdinov underlined that support to the Republic Tajikistan's development is important for Russian Federation, including capacity building on climate resilience and agriculture and water sectors. He thanked attendees and accentuated project beneficiaries that for Russian Federation, as a donor organization it is highly important to see that allocated funds transformed into positive changes of lives of concrete people. He highlighted that results are in place and it is very good to see that every US \$1 invested showed \$175 return and Donor organization is looking forward for the final report of the FCRT project. He expressed non-objection for BCRW project extension for 6 months.

Ms. Baydulloeva thanked the Government of the Russian Federation and UNDP in Tajikistan for the projects being implemented. She noted that sustainability of these projects depends on the beneficiaries who are well equipped with the knowledge and practical experience.

PSC decisions taken:

1. Projects results achieved in 2021 were evaluated positively.
2. BCRAW Project Annual Work Plan for 2022 was unanimously approved.
3. BCRAW project no-cost extension until September 2022 supported and official request to be submitted to the donor organization.
4. Include Ivan Tojik jamoat to BCRW project target area.
5. Ensure documenting the project results, success stories and lessons learned and communication with the project beneficiaries and wider auditory.
6. Follow up the access of the farmers to the green credits and funds as an important factor of the sustainability.

Prepared by

Ms. Zumrat Normatova, Project Analyst, UNDP
DRMP

Reviewed by:

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Approved by:

Mr. Christophoros Politis, Deputy Resident
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23.12.2021

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