

Government of Nepal
Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
Local Governance and Community Development Programme


Name of Meeting
Technical Assistance Steering Committee (TASC)
12th TASC meeting

DATE: 17th AUGUST 2015
LOCATION: MINISTRY OF FEDERAL AFFAIRS AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, SINGHDURBAR
TIME START: 02:00PM END: 14:00AM
COORDINATOR: MR. ESHOR PAUDEL, UNDER SECRETARY/NPM

INTRODUCTION:

Mr. Purusottam Nepal, outgoing National Programme Manager welcomed representatives from development partners, MoFALD officials and PCU experts in the 11th TASC meeting. Mr. Nepal introduced Mr. Ishwar Raj Paudel, new National Programme Manager and requested him to chair the meeting. The TASC met to discuss action taken on the 10th TASC decisions, progress and achievements of the second quarter 2015, proposed activity under Policy and Programme Support Facility (PPSF) (FY 2015/2016).

AGENDA	DISCUSSIONS
Main highlights of the presentation	
STATUS ON THE ACTION TAKEN FOLLOWING FROM THE NINTH TASC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AWP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Management Information System (MIS) Specialist (two) supported through Human Development and Social Protection Project (HDSPP) will continue through LGCDP up to December 2015 and handover process of HDSPP related assets will be initiated. - The Infrastructure training manual to be placed in the LGCDP website and the roll out of such training to be supported through JFA. 2. PPSF Audit Report: Audit report for PPSF to be shared to concern DPs after finalization. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is completed and will be shared with PPSF DPs 3. Urban Governance Expert (UGE) deployment to new Municipality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MoFALD to share additional information and reference such as revised TOR for UGEs to support new municipalities to discuss again/ in a meeting or via email. - Decision has been made at Programme Recruitment Facility (PRF) task force



to deploy the existing UGEs to new municipalities.

Other

: It was noted that the Local Governance Advisor needs to be filled out possibly through a consultancy based position. It was noted that the vacant position for Public Finance Management (PFM) expert be filled out along with the Programme Assistant for the DP Cell.

- Local Governance Advisor ToR finalized and the PCU PFM expert position short listing on going, and the selection process to be completed by 30th Aug 2015

PRF Update

PRF detailed concept paper and operational guidelines and policy document was submitted by the consulting team to the ministry. However, it was noted that several consultations and discussions are needed to finalize and implement PRF recommendations. Till then, as per National Advisory Committee (NAC) and Sub National Advisory Committee (Sub NAC) decisions the PRF Task Force has been constituted under the leadership of National Programme Director (NPD). During the Task Force meeting on the 6th of August 2015, it was decided that all the District Governance Experts (DGEs) and UGEs shall be extended until July 2016. For DDCs and municipalities, where Programme officer (PO) positions are vacant or there are no PO positions at all, two programme officer (PO) positions shall be deployed by March 2016. In case, there is one PO already, one more will be hired within the given deadline. The primary objective is to internalize the position eventually and Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) and Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) to be extended until the end of LGCDP-II (June 2017). However, the current positions at RCU and PCU will be reviewed. As new Secretary of the ministry is still to board, the decisions will be formalized after informing him about the decision.

AOB

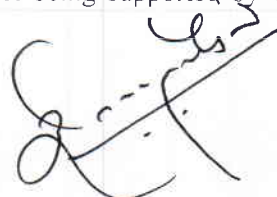
- Support for early recovery activities of UNDP to be supported by other DPs
- Participation of MoFALD Team including NPMs for International De-Log Workshop supported by ADB next week in Manila.
- Retreat workshop for PCU/RCU Staff

Key discussions and responses by the management

Output Group 4 Manager mentioned that some of the major functions of the ministry have become similar prior to the Earth Quake (EQ). There has been good reform in installing Village Development Committee (VDC) accounting software. There is a need to develop enabling environment to successfully implement the accounting software. He pointed out that there is a need to (a) develop PFM capacity at ground level, (b) develop capacity at managerial level, (c) join hand in monitoring the PFM efforts made at local level (d) motivate and encourage PFM staff at all levels.

Representative from DFID noted that there is inconsistency in the documents circulated for TASC meeting, thereby misleading information. More concentration is required towards accuracy of the documents. The workshop that is meant to be held between PCU/RCU and DPs needs to be done asap. The primary agenda for the workshop is to feed in the positions revision from RCU and PCU on continuing, merging and discontinuing certain positions in view of the future programme direction.

Concern was also raised regarding the early recovery project being supported by UNDP. Has this been already



included in the output 9? Was there ample discussion before including the project in output 9 though, UNDP is mainly responsible for implementation under LGCDP's overall management? It would provide much clarity to have the same brief in a written format or shared via email to other DPs. Concern over the additional program staff like program officers at District Development Committee (DDCs) and Municipalities were shown. How LGCDP is going to recruit those staff? It was suggested that after the midterm review, it will be easy to assess the program and staff structure on the needs based approach.

Representative from Norway noted that target vs progress could be good modality to show the results about where we are. It could be better if the progress were highlighted based on the 2nd quarter's target. It is important to first have ministry's stand on PRF so that DPs can have a discussion on that and come to an agreement. The study list prepared by the DP cell should be shared in order to assess which of the study is important or needed or if it has been carried out already. It was suggested that the task force approved by NAC should further work on PRF.

Response from NPM

- Some time is required to decide on PRF report and recommendations officially. MoFALD is planning to support DDCs and Municipalities with 2 program officers (PO). The POs are supposed to replace DGE/UGE after July 2016. PFM expert in PCU will be on board by the end of September. There will be no additional resources for RRF implementation. If the studies under output-9 are not needed, then there is a need to change RRF as well.
- Early recovery is aligned program activities and will only use the LGCDP framework and not the resources. Early recovery program will be implemented with separate account under LGCDP framework. He requested the other DPs to support and replicate the UNDP initiatives on early recovery projects.
- A delegation is participating in Asian Development Bank (ADB) organized De-Log workshop next week. Requesting the TASC team to approve for Mr. Anil Chandrika and Dr. Bhola P. Dahal's participation in the said workshop.
- Revision of Result Resource Framework (RRF) might be needed to incorporate new activities. VDC restructuring studies through PPSF shall be initiated. VDC restructuring has already been committed by GoN via budget speech and in GON's policy and program for FY 2015/16. .

Representative from UNDP mentioned that total fund tentatively USD 2.9 million will be required to run the pillar one of PPSF till July 2017 (about 18 months) in line with the discussion and decision of PRF task force. But the actual figure need to be worked out after the formal decision on PRF, including the restructuring of RCUs/PCU. Next year is focused on improving certain areas; decentralization, designing new programme, small studies and evaluation.

Representative from Denmark expressed concerns over the fund gap for transitional arrangements. And also put the remarks on what are the plan, strategy of MoFALD in mitigating measures taken in hiring the vacant positions under LGCDP.

Representative from DP Cell mentioned that the consultation with PCU/RCU can be linked with regional retreat to find out the requirements of RCU and PCU. With regards to PPSF funding gaps there is a need to review the requirements carefully to address the existing funding gaps, the fund gaps mentioned in the RRF are those area which was not funded as part of the current cost sharing agreements.

UNDP- Country Director mentioned that level of leadership shown by MoFALD in the discussion is very encouraging and that he is impressed with the frank exchange. He added that early recovery programme managed by UNDP and jointly implemented by local bodies and UNDP will not substantially fall under PPSF but for accounting purpose it will be managed and recorded under PPSF. The Early Recovery (ER) activities are isolated and will not take the time of the people involved in PPSF or dilute the focus of PPSF, which is providing support

to LGCDP. But for purely bureaucratic and accounting purposes, UNDP needs a mechanism to record its expenditures under the ER programme. So to avoid going through the long and lengthy process of creating a separate project, UNDP wishes to use an existing project to link the programme delivery, and LGCDP comes as a natural fit for UNDP to implement the ER project as the key partner is MoFALD as UNDP wants to use the existing and available national mechanism- through the local Bodies (LBs). Since UNDP prefers to utilize existing systems and building capacity of LBs, LGCDP was an obvious choice. None of the PPSF current donors are donors to the ER project. Decisions taken on ER activities will be informed to PPSF, and in financial reporting, it will be specific and isolated, clarifying the funding situation. Since the ER donors are different to that of LGCDP PPSF donors, there will be enough firewalling between these two supports. A separate steering committee will also be established with the MOFALD joint secretary in charge of Disaster and fire division to oversee and manage the ER related activities.

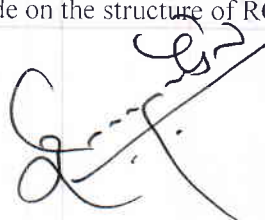
It is important to recognize the fact that the country is going through a very profound transition. Probably, the current discussion and agreed modalities is missing the tool to support this transition. It may thus require revising the programme document to incorporate current changes which was not initially envisioned while designing the programme document. Since, Nepal is now having serious problems in struggling against natural disasters like earthquake, floods and landslides, therefore, to support the victims from the every possible corner is very important. The victims are really in need of tools, knowledge, capacity and all possible resources to recover from the existing problems. Hence it was requested that the other DPs come up with support to contribute to local bodies through existing channel of PPSF. He further focused on the social fabric at the local level for sustainability and progress through meaningful support from existing channel that we have. Perhaps PPSF and LGCDP can be used to provide ideas/studies to enlighten those who draft the constitution and support the future government while enhancing role of DPs in supporting decentralization. As seen from the recent earthquake, local bodies are the first responders to such disasters and first victims to the crisis as well. It cannot be denied that these authorities are not well equipped and need further strengthening to tackle future crisis. Their roles are going to be larger in the next governance system as well. It is vital to strengthen the social fabric for a sustainable approach. The retreat should take this in account. Also, there is need of forward looking evaluation of the LGCDP programme; what has been done and the way forward. The Manila De-Log workshop is a good platform. Perhaps, LGCDP/PPSF can take DPs through the most flexible approach post manila workshop.

Some additional response from National Programme Manager (NPM):

- DPs including UNDP are concerned if/whether LGCDP support for EQ affected areas can be utilized at VDC and DDC level? So far limited DPs support is going through government mechanism. However, Early Recovery Cluster is utilizing the LGCDP/government mechanism. Other DPs from ER cluster should follow from that. Utilizing the existing mechanism will help institutionalize government and the activities can be integrated in the planning frame.
- Regarding early recovery project of UNDP, it will be an aligned programme under LGCDP and not an additional project under PPSF. Early Recovery will be led by the Disaster Management Section of MoFALD. Fund will be not channelized via LGCDP but overall activities will be reported via LGCDP.

Decisions

1. An organizational and Management (O&M) study will be conducted prior to assessing the Technical Assistance (TA) support required; whether to hire temporary staff or regular staff as per the need.
2. PPSF Audit: it will be circulated soon.
3. Early Recovery Project: Early recovery project is a firewalled component within LGCDP-PPSF. There will be a separate mechanism within the ministry led by Disaster Management Section to coordinate and decide on the ER component and PPSF board (TASC) will be informed about the decision made
4. PRF: Task Force will further work on PRF and will decide on the structure of RCUs/PCU soon.



5. Participation in International Workshop ADB: Meeting endorsed and approved the proposal of the NPM seeking the participation Mr. Anil Chandrika as the DPs representative for the upcoming international seminar on Decentralization and Local Governance supported by ADB in Manila.
6. Workshop: A retreat workshop will be held with PCU/RCU staff in an appropriate time during August End or in September.

Mr. Purusottam Nepal thanked all DPs for their generous support during his tenure as a Program Manager of LGCDP. He said, formally, this was the last meeting as a NPM and assured all that he is open to give his input in the coming meetings based on the need and wished LGCDP Program for success in the days and years to come.

Meeting concluded with remarks by Mr. Ishwar Raj Poudel, NPM. He thanked all the participants who put their valuable views in the meeting.

ATTENDANCE LOG

S.NO	NAME	DESIGNATION	ORGANIZATION
1	Mr. Purusottam Nepal	Under Secretary/Ex-Programme Manager	MoFALD/LGCDP II
2	Mr. Ishwor Raj Poudel	Under Secretary/Programme Manager	MoFALD/LGCDP II
3	Mr. Chhabi Rijal	Under Secretary	MoFALD
4	Mr. Subas Chandra Siwakoti	Under Secretary (Account)	MoFALD
5	Mr Ramesh Sharma	Admin Officer	MoFALD
6	Mr. Benard Meyer	Country Director	UNDP
7	Ms. Laura Leyser	Governance Advisor	DFID
8	Ms. Sophie Khemkhadje	Deputy Country Director	UNDP
9	Mr. Suresh Balakrishnan	RTA	UNCDF
10	Marie Throne	Counselor	RDE
11	Ms. Manju Lama	PO	Denmark
12	Dr. Bholu Prasad	Governance Advisor	Norway



	Dahal		
13	Mr. Yam Nath Sharma	Assistant Country Director	UNDP
114	Ms. Pragya Bashyal	Program Analyst	UNDP
15	Ms. Pragyan Joshi	Program Officer	UNCDF
16	Mr. Anil Chandrika	Coordinator	DP Cell
17	Dr. Raghu Shrestha	Coordination and Monitoring Specialist	DP Cell
18	Ms. Shailee Mmandhar	Program Manager	DFID
19	Ms. Reshu Karki	Communication and Documentation Officer	LGCDP II
20	Mr. Mahesh Pokharel	Procurement Specialist	LGCDP II
21	Dr. Purusottam Poudel	RBM Specialist	LGCDP II
22	Mr. Jagannath Adhikari	Planning Specialist	LGCDP II
23	Mr. C.P. Sigdel	RGCDE	LGCDP II
24	Mr. Lina Nath Upadhyaya	NA.SU.	LGCDP II

