

UNDP-GEF MTR Management Response

Management response to the Midterm Review of Strengthening Community Resilience in Dili to Ainaro Road Corridor

Project Title: Strengthening Community Resilience in Dili to Ainaro Road Corridor

UNDP Project ID (PIMS) #: 5056

GEF Project ID (PMIS) #: 5108

Midterm Review Mission Completion Date: August 23, 2017

Date of Issue of Management Response:

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Contributors:

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Context, background and findings

The DARDC project is a project supported by UNDP, GEF-LDCF, and the Government of Timor-Leste. It is funded by a grant from the GEF-LDCF of USD 5,250,000, an in-kind contribution from UNDP of USD 650,000 and an in-kind contribution of USD 13,026,780 from the Government of Timor-Leste. In addition, parallel co-financing through the WB-BCDRP and the WB-RCRP estimated at 23,690,000 was identified during the PPG phase. The project started in October 2014 and its duration is 4 years to September 2018. It is implemented under the “*Direct Implementation Modality (DIM)*”. The implementing partner is the National Disaster Management Directorate (NDMC) within the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS). Other responsible parties include the National Directorate for Climate Change of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Environment (MCIE), Ministry of State Administration (MSA), Ministry of Public Works (MPW), Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF). Finally, a joint Project Steering Committee (PSC) for both the LDCF project and the WB-BCDRP was set up to oversee the implementation of both projects.

This Mid-Term Review (MTR) - a requirement of UNDP & GEF procedures was initiated by UNDP Timor-Leste Country Office, which is the Commissioning Unit and Implementing Entity for this project. This review provided an in-depth assessment of project achievements and progress towards its objectives and outcomes.

The review team found that the overall progress made so far by the project was limited. Due to numerous delays since the outset of this project – mostly management delays to hire staff, including a new CTA and consultants and procuring equipment and services including identifying potential service suppliers as well as establishing agreements with government agencies – project activities have been slow to be implemented. One particular indicator showing that the project is behind schedule is

the level of project disbursements. With a project starting date in October 2014, the project expended \$1,881,400 during the first 32 months or only 36% of the LDCF grant versus 67% of its timeline (32 months out of 48 months).

Despite the current low level of achievements so far, the Review Team also noted that in the last few months, the implementation of the project has accelerated, corresponding to the arrival of a new CTA to lead the project. According to the project team, the project has been advancing swiftly for the last 8 weeks with identifying, tendering and contracting suppliers of services and goods requested by the project. Discussion with the Project Team indicates that about \$280,000 to \$300,000 are in the process of being contracted, in addition to regular project expenses such as staff, training activities, grants, etc

Recommendations and management response

Midterm Review recommendation 1. DRM to incorporate the Sendai Framework for Action and the legislation on decentralization and promote these new instruments to the new government				
Management response: Related discussions have commenced with the director of NDMD (project focal point) and with the new Minister of Social Solidarity. To ensure support for this activity, a budget allocation has been made for 2018. This has been approved by the project board meeting on 12 th December, 2017.				
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking ¹	
			Comments	Status ²
1.1 Preparation of ToR and approval from project board	By the end of 2017	PMU		completed
1.2 Recruitment of a national consultant to revise DRM Policy and the final draft to be approved by project board	By the end of 2018	PMU and project board		Completed

Midterm Review recommendation 2. It is recommended to focus much more at the Suco level to demonstrate DRM planning (bottom-up) and local actions

¹ If the MTR is uploaded to the ERC, the status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre database (ERC).

² Status of Implementation: Completed, Partially Completed, Pending.

Management response: Based on the Community Action Plan (CAP) developed through CVCA process, Annual Work Plan 2018 has allocated budget to work with community groups at Suco level to implement the CAP.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
2.1 Preparation of community action plan (CAP)	By the end of 2017	PMU		completed
2.2 Implementation of CAP through community grant programme	By the end of project	PMU	Ongoing	completed

Midterm Review recommendation 3. It is recommended to plan and budget a six-month extension to finalize core activities and provide more time to assess, learn and promote the replicability of achievements throughout Timor-Leste

Management response: The closing balance for 2017 is US\$ 1,811,706.29 (inclusive of NEX advance). The expected total delivery in 2018 is US\$ 1,320,705.55 which includes approved budget for AWP 2018 (US\$1,105,000) and NEX advance (US\$ 215,705.55). There will be about 0.5 million for 2019 (until October 31st 2019) provided the delivery is 100% in 2018 including NEX advance. The project activities will be actively implemented only until June 2019 with reduced number of project staff and the remaining 4 months will be mainly for assessing, learning, terminal evaluation scale up plan, closing of the activities and hand over of the project assets. The project extension has been approved by the project board meeting on 12th December 2017.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
3.1 Preparation of Justification and budget allocation for extension and approval from UNDP GEF	By July end, 2018	PMU and CO	1 year no cost extension	completed

It is recommended for UNDP-RCU in Bangkok to provide more technical support for implementing CVCAs

Management response: The DARDC project has already completed the CVCA in its targeted Sucos and waiting for the draft report. The report will be reviewed by the regional office.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
3.1 Recruitment of consultants	By September, 2017	PMU		Completed
3.2 Completion of CVCA and CAP	By the end of 2017			Completed

Midterm Review recommendation 4. It is recommended to organize a project retreat with the Project Team and key Stakeholders to review project progress to date and develop a shared vision for the remaining period

Management response: The project has already conducted retreat for the project partners on December 1-2 to achieve the recommendation objectives from the retreat event. The project presented the MTR report during the retreat, discussed various issues of implementation and provided recommendations.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
4.1 Preparation of a concept note for the retreat and get approval from technical working group	By the end of October, 2017	PMU		completed
4.2 Organize retreat involving all project partners	By the end of December 2017	PMU	Also approved plan for 2018 and 2019	completed

Midterm Review recommendation 5. It is recommended to prepare an exit strategy for the project to ensure an orderly disengagement of project support and maximize the sustainability of project achievements

Management response: The project will work with its implementing partners to prepare scale up and exit plans. As redocumented by the MTR, the project will start working on this during the last 6 months of the project.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
5.1 Commission the final evaluation	May 30, 2019	PMU	Ongoing	Partially completed
5.2 Preparation of exist strategy based on final evaluation	By the of Oct, 2019	PMU		Not completed

Midterm Review recommendation 6. It is recommended to expedite the administration process as much as possible with direct payments during the remaining period of the project

Management response: The recommendation is well noted. The project has been implementing activities with MSS through direct payment system. The project has proposed same modality to work with Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF). The last quarter of 2017, the project will implement MAF activities through direct payment modality.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
6.1 Discuss with project board regarding project implementation modality and agree new modality if applicable	By the end of December, 2017		Project has been following mixed modality	Completed

Midterm Review recommendation 7. It is recommended for the PSC to meet at least twice a year and the TWG to meet quarterly confirming the recent PSC decision

Management response: The project has already decided to hold PSC meeting twice a year and TWG meeting three times a year. The 2nd PSC meeting of the year was on December 12th and the third TWG meeting of the year was hold on 2nd December.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
7.1 Endorse this through project board meeting	By the end of 2017	PMU	It was decided by board but in 2018 they only met once due to election.	Completed

Midterm Review recommendation 8. It is recommended to plan the necessary survey(s), including a household survey during the last 6 months of the project to provide information necessary to measure the performance of the project

Management response: Noted. This will to be a part of terminal evaluation of the project.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
8.1 Development of questionnaire based on final evaluation.	By the end of June	PMU	Ongoing	Non completed
3.2. Conduct household survey if recommended by final evaluation.	By the end of Oct	PMU	Ongoing	Non completed

Midterm Review recommendation 9. It is recommended to increase communication activities to disseminate project achievements, lessons learned and best practices, focusing on project stakeholders but also on public at large to increase awareness on how to reduce the risks of climate-induced disasters and a more effective coordination among stakeholders

Management response: Communications activities have been given greater priority with the arrival of the new CTA. In the last six months, the project has produced three bulletins, special bulletin on Fukuoka system, special bulletin on risk reductions for local communities, communication of risks maps at local level, hazard warning boards in the project areas etc. The project has also published DRM training manual, launched online disaster database.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
9.1 Preparation of communication strategy	By the end of December, 2017	PMU		completed
9.2 Conduct communication activities as suggested	Until the end of the project	PMU	Ongoing	Completed