



Pacific  
Community  
Communauté  
du Pacifique

**Minutes of The *GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE ALLIANCE PLUS: SCALING UP PACIFIC ADAPTATION (GCCA+ SUPA)*  
Project - Scaling up the Soasoa drainage system, Fiji.  
**1st Steering Committee Meeting**  
**held at Bali Tower, Level 3, Toorak**  
**Suva,**  
**on Wednesday, 13th May 2020, 9am.****

**Participants:**

Mr Shivanal Kumar & Shayal Kumar, Ministry of Economy, Climate Change & International Cooperation

Mr. Amit Singh, Director Policy, Ministry of Waterways

Mr. Cho, Senior Engineer, Ministry of Waterways

Vivienne Alifereti, Engineer, Ministry of Waterways

Sweta Kumar, Research Officer, Ministry of Waterways

Mr Rahul Tikaram, SPC, Fiji National Coordinator SUPA,

*\*Participants list attached as **Annex 1***

**1. Welcome and opening Remarks**

**Mr. Rahul Tikaram – Fiji National Project Coordinator (NC)**, started the session with a welcome note and opening remarks about the mandate of the steering committee. NC indicated that the committee must meet at least once every quarter as a way of keeping track of the progress of the project itself but also as a forum where issues pertaining to the project can be solved through ideas and effective dialogue. The NC played an important role in facilitating such meetings and asked that issues be discussed openly and freely by partner agencies. He hoped that a benchmark will be set for greater partnership through this first steering committee.

- ✓ NC asked Vivienne for a word of prayer to start the meeting
- ✓ After the prayer, NC asked each member to introduce themselves to the committee
- ✓ NC on behalf of Director MoWE advised that the Director Amit will only attend part of the meeting as he had to attend to urgent matters of the ministry and that other staff of the ministry will represent him including senior engineer Mr. Cho, Sweta Kumar and Vivienne Alifereti

- ✓ NC highlighted it was wise to have called for the steering committee early, even before the signing of the PDD as it would allow the committee to be established and be active for future deliberations. This was one of the main reasons for calling the meeting.
- ✓ Shivanal asked if other members could attend to which NC clarified that the committee was open for other members and invitations will be sent based on request from the members of the committee itself. However, for the committee to function a staff from CCICD and MoWE must be present including the NC as stipulated in the PDD. NC highlighted that this is the first meeting aimed at establishing the committee.

## 2. **TOR for the Steering committee**

The NC highlighted that in addition to the basic mandate of the steering committee under the PDD, a TOR was drafted and circulated to the members a week earlier. This included a detailed mandate of the committee as highlighted by the NC as follows:

1. Discuss the progress of the project including monitoring of activities and outputs
  2. Identify issues and risks in the implementation of the project activities
  3. Seek ideas and solutions to issues highlighted so as to ensure the timely implementation of project activities
  4. Make decisions in the best interest of project with majority agreeing
  5. Committee must seek to meet at least once every quarter
  6. The quorum for the committee is 3 members, one from MoWE, one from CCICD and the NC from SPC.
  7. The representative from the implementing agency namely MoWE must be a senior staff from the ministry (e.g. senior engineer, principle officer, director level)
  8. As the implementing agency, MoWE may also invite the Permanent Secretary to attend when major issues are at hand that cannot be solved and need urgent actions.
  9. Additional members may be included if and when required including members from other ministries
  10. The NC will chair the meetings and provide general updates on each of the Key Result Areas (KRA's)
  11. NC or a designate will also take down minutes of the meeting and circulate it within a week of the meeting.
  12. The basic and primary mandate of the steering committee as stipulated in the PDD must be followed and adhered to.
- ✓ NC then called for any amendments, input or changes on the TOR
  - ✓ NC also highlighted that so far, the problems and issues that have come up, including some major ones, has been amicably solved through liaising closely with MoWE, CCICD and SPC SUPA.
  - ✓ MoWE staff endorsed the TOR for the steering committee while Shivanal asked for a couple of days for him to see the TOR again and provide any amendments

if needed. Shivanal indicated that the TOR was generally well-articulated, and he said it is best if it kept simple and straight forward.

- ✓ Later Shivanal provided 3 additional points for ToR as follows:
  - Agenda to be circulated in advance
  - Each agenda item to be discussed in a reasonable timeframe
  - At the end of the meeting the chair to recap any major decisions
- ✓ NC highlighted the TOR was circulated when the invitation was sent out and was drafted by NC with advice from Director Amit.
- ✓ The endorsed ToR for the steering committee is attached as **Annex 2**

### 3. **Cabinet Paper**

The second agenda discussed was the progress of the cabinet paper. The NC provided a brief recap of the activities relating to the drafting of the paper as follows. The drafting of the paper involved several revisions and both the NC and CCICD was heavily involved in ensuring a well-informed paper was done. In addition, the process involved sending the CP through the chain of command from the Climate Change Specialist to the Permanent Secretary to the solicitor general's office as well as seeking a support letter from MoWE. Input on the cabinet paper was also given by MoWE. It was a milestone in getting clearance from the solicitor general's office. Sending to each person required accompanying minutes or memorandums. All accompanying minutes/memorandums was drafted by the NC and signed by Shivanal. The positive part of this process was that the NC was able to build a solid partnership with CCICD. However, given the COVID-19 situation, the final phase of getting cabinet approval was delayed.

- ✓ The NC then asked Shivanal to provide an update to where the CP is at and when it may go to cabinet for approval.
- ✓ Shivanal informed the committee that currently the cabinet paper was signed by the Minister of Economy 2 days ago (11/05/19). He informed the committee that more than 20 copies were printed and sent to the cabinet office at around 12:30pm yesterday.
- ✓ He highlighted that currently it was sent to the cabinet as a "written opinion" as the cabinet meeting was deferred. This will allow ministers to consider the cabinet paper individually at their own time and give their decision.
- ✓ Shivanal asked Director Amit about the estimated time it takes for written opinion to be approved.
- ✓ Director Amit estimated a 2-week time frame from today for the approval to be obtained based on his general understanding
- ✓ Shivanal said that once approval is given then his permanent secretary can sign the PDD.
- ✓ NC asked that upon getting the approval, how best would it be to undertake signing of the PDD, to which Shivanal said it would be signed by his permanent secretary first then sent to MoWE for signing and then to SPC. This would be the best way of doing it amid the COVID-19 situation. NC agreed with Shivanal and said that he can facilitate this once it comes to MoWE by taking it to SPC SUPA for signature after the two ministries have signed.

#### 4. **TOR – Watershed Management Plan**

The NC provided a brief update on the progress of the TOR for the watershed management plan consultancy as follows. The drafting of the TOR started from gathering all relevant information about the important components of a TOR including social, economic, biological, climatic, geophysical and other aspects. In terms of background knowledge, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) guidelines were used in the drafting of the TOR. From the first draft the document was then handed to director MoWE for his input where he also included aspects of flood history and flood mapping in the Soasoa area that needed to be evaluated by the consultants. Other important aspects of the TOR were the criteria in selecting a suitable consultant, the deliverables and other details of the work required to be put in. After the Directors input, the document was sent to SPC SUPA team for consideration. A skype meeting was done between SPC and MoWE in clarifying some aspects of the TOR. One of the issues highlighted was to make the TOR very clear for the consultant with very specific wordings on the activities required. In addition, it was also highlighted that the TOR must also be within the allocated budget and therefore the need to carefully select the most important activities that need to be undertaken and leaving out those that are not needed. Having taken on board the comments and clarifications over the skype meeting the SPC SUPA team took time in amending the TOR and sent it back to MoWE for consideration. This was then considered and amended by MoWE and sent back to SPC SUPA team.

- ✓ NC also highlighted that it was wise that we all agreed the tendering process be done by SPC given that it is much more efficient.
- ✓ NC also hoped that through the tendering process through SPC a suitable, experienced and qualified consultant will be found, given that the watershed management is for a 30-year period, hence the plan needs to be well developed.
- ✓ Shivanal asked if there were any technical issues for the TOR that needed to be sorted out to which NC advised that the scope of work required several revision and amendments from SPC SUPA and Director MoWE, which have been made in this regard. One of the aspects that MoWE wanted to have part of the TOR was the flood history and flood mapping, which has been incorporated in the TOR.
- ✓ Shivanal asked that if there was a consultant already earmarked for the work, to which NC said that according to his understanding it will be advertised on the SPC website, all wishing to bid may do so and selection will be based on merit.
- ✓ NC indicated that the consultant should tentatively start work by the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2020.

#### 5. **Topographical Survey**

A brief update was provided by NC on the topographical survey. NC confirmed that senior engineer at the MoWE, namely Mr. Cho was the person tasked with the topographical survey. He highlighted that the Topographical Map would only be for the critical area, which is the area where the engineering intervention would take place. Therefore, there was no need for a topographical map for the whole watershed, which will not only incur unwarranted expenses but manpower and time.

The critical area topographical map was sufficient for informing the designs for the engineering structures. He also indicated that the ministry already has existing data in-relation to the critical area thus only a small survey was done for areas that lacked data. This was done by the survey team based in Labasa upon his directive. The existing data was combined with that obtained from the rapid survey to produce a topographical map has been made. The map was produced and focused focuses on the lower part of the watershed where the engineering structures will be upgraded. The map showed the Nasuva creek, sugarcane farms, seawalls, flood and flap gates spillways and mangrove areas. This map allows identification of areas of concern in-relations to the flow of water as well as potential areas for the floodgate to be constructed.

- ✓ Mr Cho agreed that the survey was done, and previous data was also used in the topographical map
- ✓ NC thanked Mr. Cho and his team on the early work done in making the topographical map,
- ✓ NC asked if the draft topographical maps could be shared with him to which Nr. Cho agreed that it will be e-mailed soon.

## 6. **Engineering Designs**

NC highlighted that a major limitation of the initial proposed designs of the engineering structures was seen by Mr. Cho. Explanations provided by Mr Cho indicate that the increase in capacity from a 4 barrel to 6 barrel flood gate would result in the existing structure becoming unstable with a probability of it being washed away during heavy rain periods. Therefore it is recommended that readjustments be done with a solution of putting the 2-barrel as a separate unit which was agreed to. The second redesigning was that the existing 1-barrel flap gate to be converted into a two barrel flood gate. The third modification was to increase the levee along the most vulnerable areas by an average of 0.2 meters and not by 0.3 meters. All these changes were made on the basis that the cost as well as time of construction would remain the same. These changes were also reflected on the Project Design Document (PDD) and approval from SPC SUPA team was sought and given. In addition, the revised PDD was sent to CCICD to be reattached to the cabinet paper. It was fortunate that these issues were identified, and solutions found early in the project life hence it was easier to have made the changes now but also prevented future failures in the engineering structures upon completion.

- ✓ Mr. Cho highlighted that he came into the project when the PDD was already drafted and the engineer at that time was different.
- ✓ Mr. Cho said that he saw what was there in the PDD, was not a wise design as it would result in the existing structure becoming unstable hence he made new plans for the engineering activity to be undertaken as part of the project as highlighted by NC.
- ✓ Mr Cho also highlighted that the lower Soasoa area was once a mangrove area, not more than 0.5m above mean sea level hence was a low-lying area. The area was reclaimed some 40 years ago for sugar cane farming however only the

mangrove was cleared to make way for farming with seawall made to prevent seawater coming in and the area is highly prone to flooding.

- ✓ Mr Cho highlighted that in the 1980's the 4 barrel floodgate was made at the natural creek and not at the man-made channel
- ✓ Based on these and other characteristics of the Soasoa drainage area, Mr. Cho had to reconsider the initial proposed designs and make changes.
- ✓ NC also noted that the trash rack was a component of a floodgate and that it will now be placed further up the channel rather than on the mouth of the floodgate as highlighted by Mr. Cho, as a way to prevent blockage of the floodgate mouth.
- ✓ Mr Cho highlighted that currently they are waiting for a site survey to identify which area would be most suitable for the 2-barrel floodgate to be constructed. This would be somewhere 'adjacent' to the old 4-barrel flood gate as now stated in the PDD.

#### 7. **Selection panel**

The NC highlighted that there may be a need to have a selection panel ready if needed when the tenders for the watershed management plan are received. Having at least a member of each ministry already designated will save time and allow for an efficient selection process. As such MoWE and CCICD are asked to select a staff to be part of the panel.

- ✓ Shivanal indicated that either him or Shayal from CICCD will be part of the selection team
- ✓ Director Amit will be part of the selection team from MoWE

#### 8. **Other Matters**

- ✓ Shivanal asked clarification on the second set of changes currently being done on the PDD, and what was the reason for it.
- ✓ The NC said the second change was made to the PDD where the wording around MoWE commitment to KRA 3.4 to 3.6 was changed to indicate that it was part of its routine maintenance work and not an additional activity that would require separate monetary allocation by MoWE. This was done as Gillian highlighted that there was some disagreement between the CP and PDD where the CP stated that there would be no monetary allocation for the project by MoWE but the PDD said something to the contrary. The change was then done on page 28, sentence 4. In addition, the budget allocation for KRA 3.1 to 3.3 was combined as one in the budget table on page 27. This was because exact cost was for each is not known and may change hence a total of 295,000 Euros for all three activities.
- ✓ Shivanal asked if the Soasoa area was opened now from the lockdown, the NC said it was now open.
- ✓ Shivanal asked if the COVID-19 pandemic affects the project and how can we overcome any delays to which the NC highlighted that it has had an impact on the project, for example a visit to the site was being planned but now is on hold. NC highlighted that current progress is well on track and in some cases ahead of schedule which provides some buffer against future delays. Secondly, the project timeframe was developed with some extra time to mitigate against unforeseen situations hence this will provide a second buffer. NC also said that

at times contractors do not deliver on time and the project must ensure that reliable contractors are hired especially for the construction of hard structures.

8. **Closing Note**

NC humbly thank everyone for their attendance and contribution and making it a successful meeting. NC confirmed a minute will be circulated with a week from today.

**Annex 1:**

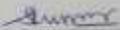
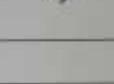
Ministry of Waterways & Environment

Attendances List

Fiji SUPA - Steering Committee Meeting #1

Venue: Level 3, Bala Tower

Date: 13/12/20 Time: 9am - 10am

Name	Organization	Designations	Contact
Shayal Kumar	MDE - CEO	CEO	
Shivanat Kumar	"	COO	
Swaraj Kumar	waterways	RO.	
Vivienne Alferati	waterways	Engineer	
Amit Singh	MoWE	Dir. Exp/Plan	
KHIN MAUNG CHAO	MoWE	PE (WW)	

## **Annex 2**

### **TOR for Steering committee**

1. Discuss the progress of the project including monitoring of activities and outputs
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9. Additional members may be included if and when required including members from other ministries
10. The NC will chair the meetings and provide general updates on each of the Key Result Areas (KRA's).
11. The agenda for the meeting is to be sent to members in advance.
12. During the meeting, each agenda item must be discussed well but within a reasonable time frame to prevent the meeting from dragging on.
13. At the end of the meeting a recap of major decisions made will be done
14. NC or a designate will also take down minutes of the meeting and circulate it within a week of the meeting.
15. The basic and primary mandate of the steering committee as stipulated in the PDD must be followed and adhered to.