Minutes of the First Meeting of the Steering Committee
of the UN Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region
in Uzbekistan

Tashkent
Time: 10:00 – 11:30

24 January 2019

Agenda:
- Approval of the MPHSTF Steering Committee composition;
- Approving the staffing, location and funding mechanisms of the Technical Secretariat;
- Approval of the MPHSTF Operation Manual;
- Approval of the next steps for resource mobilization for the MPHSTF;
- Approval of the programmatic priorities for and date of the first Call for Proposal;
- Approval of the date and venue of the next MPHSTF Steering Committee meeting.

I. Opening of the meeting

Opening the first meeting of the Steering Committee of the Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for Human Security for the Aral Sea region, Mr. Holmuradov greeted the participants and thanked the representatives of the donors (i.e., the Embassy of Japan and the EU Delegation) and NGOs for accepting the invitation to become members of the Fund’s Steering Committee. He reminded that the MPHSTF was established during a High-Level Event on 27 November 2018, held on the margins of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, which was chaired by the UN Secretary General Mr. Antonio Guterres.

He also called upon support from the UN agencies and partners in raising the awareness of the global community about the Aral Sea catastrophe and the Fund by helping attract international media and well-known TV channels having global outreach, such as the National Geographic, Animal Planet, NatGeoWild, BBC Science and so on.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Fraser thanked Mr. Holmuradov and the Government of Uzbekistan for their efforts in establishing the MPHSTF. She noted that the establishment of the Fund is a sign of great partnership among the government, the UN and its agencies, the donor community, and the civil society. She also welcomed the President of Uzbekistan’s Resolution of 8 January 2019 on supporting the establishment and activities of the MPHSTF as a sign of strong commitment.

She further noted currently dozens of MPTFs operate worldwide under UN auspices, but the MPHSTF for the Aral Sea region was the first one with the concept of the Human Security being at its center. This meant that the approach to tackling the issues of the region take into account the interlinkages of multiple dimensions (i.e., economic, social, health, environment, etc.). The MPHSTF exist to catalyze and support solutions that are integrated and multi-sectoral - in line with the principles of being people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific, and prevention-oriented.

The meeting continued with the presentation of Mr. Rustamov, Head of the UNDP Sustainable Development Cluster, who made a brief presentation on the programmatic and institutional aspects of the Trust Fund based on MPHSTF’s ToR and Operational Manual. In his presentation, he introduced the participants of the Steering Committee with the examples of MPTFs operating worldwide. Mr. Rustamov’s presentation is attached.
as Annex 3. After the presentation, the Steering Committee members proceeded to discuss the earlier proposed agenda items.

II. Issues discussed and decisions taken

2.1. Composition of the MPHSTF Steering Committee

On the composition of the MPHSTF Steering Committee members agreed to retain and approve the earlier suggested composition.

Decision: The composition of the Steering Committee as per Annex 2 was unanimously endorsed.

2.2. Approving the staffing, location and funding mechanisms of the Technical Secretariat;

In line with the MPHSTF TOR, a Technical Secretariat should be established to serve as the working body of the Steering Committee, being funded by the MPHSTF. Given that contributions to the MPHSTF are yet to come, it was proposed that during 2019 the functions of the Technical Secretariat would be temporarily performed by the Tashkent Office of the UN Joint Programme for the Aral Sea region.

The Tashkent office is currently funded from the UN Joint Programme budget that is managed by UNDP, which is available until the end of 2019. The Tashkent team of the UN JP on Aral Sea region consists of four staff members who have sufficient capacity to perform the functions of the Technical Secretariat: 1) Technical Coordinator, 2) Resource Mobilization specialist, 3) Fund Establishment specialist and 4) Monitoring and evaluation specialist.

Meanwhile, in the course of 2019, a full-fledged Technical secretariat is to be established with the funding from the MPHSTF.

Decision: The Tashkent Office team of the UN Joint Program for the Aral Sea region was appointed as the temporary Technical Secretariat till the end of 2019.

2.3. Operational Manual

The MPHSTF Operational Manual was developed and shared with the 5 PUNOs, Government of Uzbekistan and the UN MPTF Office. Ms. Fraser clarified that the Manual should be considered a living document and could be updated as required by decision of the Steering Committee. The participants of the Steering Committee made no comments to the Operational Manual.

Decision: The Operational Manual (Annex 4) was endorsed by the members of the Steering Committee.

2.4. Approval of the next steps for resource mobilization for the MPHSTF

It was noted that the Government of Uzbekistan would be the first donor of the Trust Fund. Hopefully, the Government of Norway and the Government Japan would be the next donors. It was noted that the mentioned governments were actively considering contributions to the Trust Fund. A number of other donors have also been approached by the Government of Uzbekistan.
The suggestion was made to develop a Roadmap on resource mobilization to the Trust Fund. In addition, the Government of Uzbekistan is developing a calendar of meetings with potential donors and the meetings will be organized accordingly.

Updating participants on the procedures and the status of the possible contribution of the Government of Japan to the Fund, Mr. Atsushi informed that the confirmation on the transfer of funds had not yet been received and was currently under review in Tokyo.

**Decision:** The Technical Secretariat (Tashkent Office of the UN JP) will develop a Resource Mobilization Strategy for approval by the MPHSTF Steering Committee (deadline – end of February 2019). Advice and input will be sought from all the Steering Committee members, including specifically the donor representatives.

### 2.5. Date of the first Call for Proposal

**Ms. Fraser** suggested if the funds were available in the MPHSTF account before April 2019, to announce the Call for proposals on April 1, 2019 and on June 1, 2019 the Steering Committee would convene to consider the results of the technical review of the PUNOs proposals by the Technical Secretariat.

In response to this suggestion, **Mr. Holmuradov** inquired about the possibility of speeding up the process.

**Decision:** The decision was taken to launch the first Call for Proposals before the end of March 2019, and convene the Steering Committee meeting to consider the results of the technical review of the proposals and decide on funding in May 2019.

### 2.6. Format of proposals and programmatic priorities for the first Call for Proposals

**Ms. Fraser** informed the participants that the amount of available funds for the first Call for Proposals would most probably be limited. In this regard, she suggested the PUNOs should work together and develop fewer but compelling, high-quality and large-scale rather than numerous but small-scale projects to show strong results at the initial stage of the MPHSTF.

With regard to programmatic priorities, it was proposed to focus the 1st call on environmental/health security (including afforestation and its longer-term benefits to health), and social security (including access to basic utilities, social protection, water, sanitation, and education).

**Ms. Yabuta** suggested an additional priority area for the 1st call for proposals to be on gender equality.

**Mr. Strihaps**, highlighting the importance of gender equality, suggested that priority attention should be paid to addressing basic needs of the affected population (including water, health, jobs) due to the nature of challenges faced in the Aral Sea region, which require immediate actions on improving the environmental situation and as well as on raising the living conditions of people, both men and women.

**Mr. Holmuradov** agreed with a focus on people's basic needs, and confirmed that the government's priority was to direct projects to bringing down the volumes of the poisonous dust and salt from the dried seabed.
In this regard, Mr. Kazbekov briefly told about the ongoing large-scale afforestation works initiated by the government in the Aral Sea basin.

Ms. Asanova noted the urgency of providing access to clean water to the people of the region.

**Decision:** Steering Committee endorsed the proposed priority areas for the 1st call for proposals, i.e. i) environmental and health security (including afforestation and its longer-term benefits to health), and ii) fundamental needs connected to social security (including access to basic utilities, social protection, water, sanitation, and education).

**III. Other issues**

3.1. Mr. Helena Fraser asked the Technical Secretariat to work with the PUNOs and national partners on baseline data for indicators. Referring to UNFPA's suggestion, she also asked the Technical Secretariat to review the gender-related outcomes in the MPHSTF results framework.

**Decision:** The decision was taken to assign the Technical Secretariat to update the MPHSTF Results Matrix (Annex 5) based on baseline data received from PUNOs.

**Decision:** It was agreed to request the Technical Secretariat, with support from UNFPA, to review the outcomes in the results framework to ensure an appropriate gender focus.

3.2. The next Steering Committee meeting.

It was suggested to convene the next Steering Committee meeting in the 3rd decade of May 2019.

**Decision:** The suggestion was endorsed by the members of the Steering Committee.

**IV. Closing Remarks**

Mr. Holmuradov thanked the participants for attending the meeting and accepting the invitations to be members of the Steering Committee. He noted that the Trust Fund’s activity is important not only for the Government but for the population living in the region foremost. He wished success to the Steering Committee members and the Fund.

For the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan

[Signature]
E. Ganiev,
Deputy Prime-Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan

For the United Nations

[Signature]
H. Fraser,
UN Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Uzbekistan
Annex 1.

List of Participants of the First Meeting of the Steering Committee of the UN Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan

1. Mr. Sukhrob Holmuradov, Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman of the State Committee on Investments of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
2. Ms. Helena Fraser, UN Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Uzbekistan
3. Mr. Badriddin Abidov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan
4. Mr. Jusipbek Kazbekov, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan
5. H.E. Mr. Eduards Stiprais, Head of the EU Delegation to Uzbekistan
6. Mr. Suda Atsushi, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan
7. Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative in Central Asia
8. Mr. Farid Garakhanov, UNDP Resident Representative a.i in Uzbekistan
9. Ms. Mieko Yabuta, UNFPA Representative in Uzbekistan
10. Ms. Maria del Pilar Alvarez-Las, UNESCO Representative a.i. in Uzbekistan
11. Mr. Sascha Graumann, UNICEF Representative in Uzbekistan
12. Ms. Sholpan Asanova, Regional department for the Republic of Karakalpakstan of the Association of Support to Children and Families
13. Ms. Natalya Abdullaeva, Karakalpakstan branch of the Public Information Center “Istiqlolli Avlod”
14. Ms. Mari Matsumoto, Portfolio Fund Portfolio Manager, UNDP MPTF Office (ex-officio)
15. Ms. Muhayyo Makhmudova, Culture Program Officer, UNESCO
16. Mr. Sardor Sagdullaev, Head of Department on Coordination of IFIs, State Committee on Investment
17. Mr. Shohjahan Jumaev, Head of Grants Management Department, State Committee on Investment
18. Mr. Akbar Nurmatov, Leading Specialist, State Committee on Investment
19. Mr. Hurshid Rustamov, Head of Sustainable Development Cluster, UNDP CO
20. Ms. Elvira Izamova, Programme Associate, Sustainable Development Cluster, UNDP
21. Mr. Kamolkhon Inomkhodjajev, UNFPA Assistant Representative
22. Mr. Zarif Jumaaev, Coordination Analyst, UN RCO
23. Mr. Anvar Melibaev, Partnership and Communication Analyst, UN RCO
24. Mr. Bakhadur Paluaniyov, Programme Manager, UN Joint Programme on Aral Sea
25. Mr. Uktam Abdurakhmanov, Technical Coordinator, UN JP on Aral Sea Region
26. Mr. Tulkun Karimov, Fund Establishment and Coordination Specialist, UN Joint Programme on Aral Sea
27. Mr. Shukhrat Umarkhojaev, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, UN Joint Programme on Aral Sea
28. Mr. Dilshod Rasulov, Resource Mobilization Specialist, UN JP on Aral Sea Region
Annex 2.

Presentation of the programmatic and institutional aspects of the MPHSTF for the Aral Sea Region in Uzbekistan
Composition of the MPHSTF Steering Committee

Co-chairs:
Mr. Sukhrob Holmuradov, Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman of the State Committee on Investments of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
Ms. Helena Fraser, UN Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Uzbekistan

Members:

Government
- Mr. Badriddin Abidov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- Mr. Jusipbek Kazbekov, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan

Donors
- H.E. Mr. Eduards Stiprais, Head of the EU Delegation to Uzbekistan
- Mr. Suda Atsushi, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan

Participating UN Organizations
- Ms. Ashita Mittal, UNODC Regional Representative in Central Asia
- Mr. Farid Garaqhanov, UNDP Resident Representative a.i in Uzbekistan.
- Ms. Mieko Yabuta, UNFPA Representative in Uzbekistan
- Ms. Maria del Pilar Alvarez-Las, UNESCO Representative a.i. in Uzbekistan
- Mr. Sascha Graumann, UNICEF Representative in Uzbekistan

Civil Society Representatives
- Ms. Sholpan Asanova, Regional department for the Republic of Karakalpakstan of the Association of Support to Children and Families
- Ms. Natalya Abdullaeva, Karakalpakstan branch of the Public Information Center “Istiqbolli Avlod”

Ex-Officio members
- Mari Matsumoto, Portfolio Fund Portfolio Manager, UNDP MPTF Office (off-line)
MPHSTF Results Matrix