

**UN BHUTAN COUNTRY FUND**

**ANNUAL programme[[1]](#footnote-1) NARRATIVE progress report**

**REPORTING PERIOD: 1 january – 31 December 2010**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Programme Title & Number |  | Country, Locality(s), Thematic Area(s)[[2]](#footnote-2) |
| * Programme Title: *Support to* ***UNDAF Outcome 5: By 2012, national capacity for environmental sustainability and disaster management strengthened***
* Programme Number *(if applicable)*
* MDTF Office Atlas Number:00073278
 | *(if applicable)*Bhutan,Nationwide,Energy, Environment and Disaster Risk Management  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Participating Organization(s) |  | Implementing Partners |
| UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNICEF,  | * National counterparts (government, private, NGOs & others) and other International Organizations
 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Programme/Project Cost (US$) |  | Programme Duration (months) |
| MDTF Fund Contribution: * *UNDP: $256,460; UNICEF: 70,935; UNEP: $ 48,165; UNESCO: $25,000*
 |  |  | Overall Duration |  |
| Agency Contribution* *by Agency (if applicable)*
 |  |  | Start Date[[3]](#footnote-3) | 16th December 2009 |
| Government Contribution*(if applicable)* |  |  | End Date or Revised End Date, *(if applicable)* | 31st December 2013 |
| Other Contribution (donor)*(if applicable)* |  |  | Operational Closure Date[[4]](#footnote-4) |  |
| TOTAL: $ 400,560 |  |  | Expected Financial Closure Date |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Programme Assessments/Mid-Term Evaluation |  | Submitted By |
| Assessment Completed - if applicable *please attach*X Yes X No Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Mid-Evaluation Report *– if applicable please attach* Yes X No Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | * Name: Pem Chuki Wangdi
* Title: Head, Management Support Unit
* Participating Organization (Lead): UNDP
* Email address: pem.wangdi@undp.org
 |

# Purpose

The programme contributed to UNDAF Outcome 5: “***By 2012, national capacity for environmental sustainability and disaster management strengthened”*** Support was allocated towards five main activities contributing to various outputs and implemented by three different agencies of the Royal Government of Bhutan and four UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNEP, and UNESCO). The specific outcome, outputs and objectives under each activity are listed below:

1. Disaster preparedness (DDM-MoHCA): ***UNDP; UNICEF***
* CT Outcome 5.2: National capacity for disaster risk management strengthened.
* CT Output 2.1 Capacity of national focal agencies, relevant sectors and disaster management authorities at all levels strengthened to implement disaster management framework
* CT Output 2.2 Preparedness and response systems to reduce risks, mitigate and cope with disasters/climate change operationalized
* Objectives: Contributing to the establishment of better preparedness and response systems to reduce risks of the Bhutanese populations from disasters
1. Implementation of Bhutan Human-Wildlife Conflict Management Strategy (MoAF): ***UNDP***
* CT Outcome 5.4: Conservation of bio-diversity and ecosystems enhanced
* CT Output.4.2 Sustainable land management, biodiversity Conservation, and utilization of natural resources promoted/strengthened
* Objective: Adopting mitigation measures to address human-wildlife conflict issues, thereby protecting crops from wildlife depredation.
1. Awareness on Climate Change (NEC): ***UNDP***
* CT outcome 5.1: National capacity to address current environmental challenges and mainstream environmental concerns into policies, plans and programs enhanced.
* CT Output 1.1. Capacity of national and local authorities/agencies to mainstream environmental concerns strengthened.
* Objective: Supporting the SAARC Art Camp on Climate Change as a side-event to the 16th SAARC Summit on Climate Change
1. Development of the Bhutan Environment Outlook and Integrated Water Resources Management Plan (NEC): ***UNEP***
* CT Outcome 5:1: National capacity to address current environmental challenges and mainstream environmental challenges and mainstream environmental concerns into policies, plans and programmes enhanced
* CT Output 1.2: Environment mainstreaming tools developed
* Objective: Support the process for the development of the Bhutan Environment Outlook and an Integrated Water Resource Management Plan.
1. International Conference on Disaster management and Cultural Heritage (DDM-MOHCA): ***UNDP; UNESCO***
* CT Outcome 5.2: National capacity for disaster risk management strengthened.
* CT Output 2.1 Capacity of national focal agencies, relevant sectors and disaster management authorities at all levels strengthened to implement disaster management framework
* Objective: Technical support to the “International Conference on Disaster Management and Cultural Heritage - Living in Harmony with the Four Elements”

# Resources

*Budget Revisions:*

The UN Bhutan Country Fund Steering Committee on 29th July 2010 endorsed the following requests for re-allocation of funds and no-cost extensions from UNDP and UNFPA:

* Request from UNDP for reprogramming of unspent funds amounting to $24,745.04 under UNDAF Outcome# 4: Governance to cover over expenditures incurred by UNDP under UNDAF Outcome# 5: Environment ($ 3,742.35) and UNDAF Outcome# 1: Poverty ($ 21,002.69)
* Request from UNFPA for re-allocation of unspent funds amounting to $ 20,000 under UNDAF Outcome# 4: Governance to UNDAF Outcome# 2: Health.

*Good Practices and Constraints*

In line with the UN General Assembly Resolution 56/201 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP (UNDG ExCom Agencies) adopted a common operational framework (known as the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) Framework) for transferring cash to government and non-government Implementing Partners. Its implementation is expected to significantly reduce transaction costs and lessen the burden that the multiplicity of UN procedures and rules creates for its partners. As a HACT compliant country since 2008, the UN System (namely UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP) in collaboration with the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) have taken the necessary steps to ensure the effective implementation of the Framework in the country.

With the goal of reducing transaction costs on part of the Government and to address the issues related to the fund request and release to and from the UN agencies to the Implementing Partners, the UN agencies with the Ministry of Finance and the Gross National Happiness Commission developed a guidance note on the Financial Procedures for UN Assisted Projects directed towards streamlining and shortening the fund request and release process between the UN agencies and the Implementing partners. In addition, in a move towards using existing government reporting procedures, the UN agencies have adopted the Standard Progress Report template used by the government as the standard reporting format for the UN. Furthermore, in a strategic move to address problems related to the non-matching of financial years between the UN and the Government, the UN agencies adopted the 18 month rolling work plan, covering the months of January through June of the following year. This allows the Implementing Partners to incorporate UN supported activities into their respective sector work plans which follows the Government’s fiscal year.

Yearly trainings are organized for both implementing partners and UN agencies to refresh and redress problems faced in financial transactions.

# Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements

The UN in Bhutan operates in a National Implementation (NIM) environment. The Government implements the projects and accordingly handles almost all procurement related activities within their respective programmes. The UN agencies (namely UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP) conducts periodic monitoring through assurance activities required under the HACT Framework such as field visits and onsite reviews conducted by UN staff, and scheduled/HACT audits by the Royal Audit Authority, Bhutan’s Supreme Audit Institution. The financial report is reported through the FACE (Funding Authorization & Certification of Expenditure) form and the progress is reported through Standard progress reports quarterly. Joint mid-year and annual reviews are also conducted as part of monitoring and evaluation of progress and performance. These reporting formats are aligned to the Government’s planning and monitoring system. In addition joint field visits, where applicable, are conducted to the project sites.

# Results

1. Disaster preparedness (DDM-MoHCA)

As planned, the programme contributed to the establishment of better preparedness and response systems to reduce risks of the Bhutanese populations from disasters. Key outputs are:

* Emergency response kits consisting of basic equipment and supplies were procured by the Department of Disaster Management and distributed to 4 districts (Sarpang, Samtse, Mongar and Trashigang).
* Specific emergency search and rescue equipment was distributed to the Royal Bhutan Police.
* A comprehensive search and rescue training was conducted for 30 national key stakeholders from the government, Royal Bhutan Police, Royal Bhutan Army and Body guards, and corporations.
* Disaster preparedness and response capacities were strengthened through a Safe School program conducted for 90 teachers in Trashigang district.
* Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) training of trainers was conducted for more than 160 district and bock officials under Bumthang, Trashigang and Trashi Yangtshe districts.
* Finalization of the guidelines on the Bhutan Disaster Assessment (BDA) tools
* Finalization of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
* Finalization of BDA tools

Some delays occurred in programme implementation due to time constraints of district officials to implement disaster management activities and unavailability of community members to attend CBDRM-trainings during farming seasons. Lessons learnt from the CBDRM-trainings were used to revise the curriculum.

1. Implementation of Bhutan Human-Wildlife conflict Management Strategy (MoAF)

As a result of the programme, communities are adopting mitigation measures to address human-wildlife conflict issues, thereby protecting crops from wildlife depredation (a very common problem in rural Bhutan). The main output of the support was an exposure visit of 9 community leaders and 4 forestry personnel to two national parks in Thailand. The leaders and forestry personnel were exposed to various mitigation measures and functioning of village committees for the resolution of human wildlife conflicts. They were also exposed to potential livelihood and income generation activities through the sustainable use of natural resources. The community leaders demonstrated keen interest in taking up mitigation measures like alarm fencing and adopt the idea of forming village level human wildlife conflict management committees in their villages and improve their existing natural wealth and sell it for nature tourism initiatives. They consider this a possible means to sustainably finance some of the mitigation measures under the Human Wildlife Conflict Management Strategy.

1. Awareness on Climate Change (NEC)

The support contributed towards organization of the SAARC Art Camp on Climate Change as a side-event to the 16th SAARC Summit on Climate Change held in Thimphu in April 2010. Artists from all eight SAARC member states were invited to the Art Camp to depict Climate Change, interact, and expose their works for the Summit delegates. In addition to the formal exhibition at the Summit, the diverse art works created during the Art Camp – some using provocative expressions and ways - received great attention from media and the general public as an innovative way to address development issues in the Bhutanese setting.

1. Development of Bhutan Environment Outlook and Integrated Water Resources Management Plan for Bhutan (NEC)

Process for the development of the Bhutan Environment Outlook and its way forward was adopted following a three day inception workshop/training (17th-19th May 2010) in Thimphu. The scope of the report will include the link between the assessment and relevant policy and decision-making processes. The workshop/training also contributed to the enhanced capacity of the environmental and policy-making community on Integrated Environmental Assessment and its participatory process.

Leading towards an Integrated Water Resources Management Plan for Bhutan, a concept paper for a more detailed water resources inventory has been developed. The paper contains a review of existing statistical data and information systems on water resources and stakeholders involved in water management.

1. International Conference on Disaster management and Cultural Heritage (DDM-MOHCA)

The support contributed towards the organization of the “International Conference on Disaster Management and Cultural Heritage - Living in Harmony with the Four Elements” which was held in Thimphu from 12-14 December 2010 and brought together 153 participants from 24 countries including Bhutan. The conference addressed the linkages between disaster management and both tangible and intangible aspects of culture. The main outcome of the conference deliberations (“Thimphu document”) holds a set of universal principles and practical recommendations, which will assist governments and practitioners in drawing on synergies between Disaster Management and Cultural Heritage, while also strengthening national, regional and global disaster management frameworks.

# Future Work Plan (if applicable)

* Disaster preparedness (DDM-MoHCA)

In 2010, the efforts to strengthen the national capacity for disaster risk management continue under the Bhutan Recovery and Reconstruction project (US$ 194,700). The project will expand and draw on the successful lessons learnt in the area of search and rescue equipment and trainings.

* Human-Wildlife conflict strategy (MoAF)

In 2011, implementation of the Human-Wildlife Conflict Management Strategy continues with the target of forming Gewog Conservation Committees, establishing a pilot crop insurance scheme, training staff in conflict and database management and construction of solar powered electric fencing (US$90,000).

* Awareness on Climate Change (NEC)

Climate Change is on the forefront of the agenda for both the government of Bhutan and UNDP. In 2011, UNDP is amongst other supporting the government in the following activities related to Climate Change: NAPA revision and programme formulation, Finalization of the Second National Communication to UNFCCC and organization of a sub-regional Climate Summit taking place in Bhutan in October 2011 for Bhutan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal as follow-up to the SAARC Summit on Climate Change. The total support in this area amounts to US$ 373,700. In addition, UNDP is also advocating for climate change mainstreaming in all sectors under various programmes.

* International Conference on Disaster management and Cultural Heritage (DDM-MOHCA)

The recommendations of the conference will be taken forward at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction organized by UNISDR in Geneva in May 2011 where the delegation of Bhutan, assisted by the UNRC in Bhutan, will play a key role. UNDP has not been requested for support to this activity.

**VIII. INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

BRRP Bhutan Recovery and Reconstruction project
CBDRM Community based Disaster Risk management

DDM Department of Disaster management

EQRRP Earthquake Risk Reduction project

Gewog Sub-district

HACT Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers

IP Implementing partner

MoAF Ministry of Agriculture and Forests

MOHCA Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs

NEC National Environment Commission

UNEDMT United Nations Environment and Disaster Management Theme Group

1. The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Priority Area for the Peacebuilding Fund; Sector for the UNDG ITF. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MDTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MDTF Office GATEWAY](http://mdtf.undp.org/) (http://mdtf.undp.org). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. All activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MDTF programme have been completed. Agencies to advise the MDTF Office. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)