

**[UN BHUTAN COUNTRY FUND]**

**BI-ANNUAL PROJECT/PROGRAMME UPDATE**

**AS OF [31st December 2010]**

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| **Participating UN Organization(s)** | UNDP, UNICEF, UNEP, UNESCO |
| **MDTF Programme Number** | 00073278 |
| **Programme Title** | **Environment** |
| **Approved Budget** **(by PO, if applicable)** | **UNDP: $256,460****UNICEF: $70,935****UNEP: $ 48,165****UNESCO:$ 25,000** |
| **Expenditure** **(by PO, if applicable)** | UNDP: $249,510UNICEF: $ 70,935UNEP: $47,941UNESCO: $ 21,880 | **% of Approved Budget****(by PO, if applicable)** | UNDP: 97%UNICEF: 100%UNEP: 100%UNESCO: 88% |
| **Forecast Final Date:**  | 31st December 2010 | **Delay****(if applicable)** | UNESCO: Requested for no-cost extension  |

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| **Qualitative achievements:** |
| * Contributing to the establishment of better preparedness and response systems to reduce risks of the Bhutanese populations from disasters, 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 were also distributed to the Royal Bhutan Police. In addition, 80 participants were trained in community based disaster risk management in Bumthang district, covering four geogs.
* Communities are adopting mitigation measures to address human-wildlife conflict issues, thereby protecting crops from wildlife depredation (a very common problem in rural Bhutan) following 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.
* 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.
* Three officials, who are focal persons for disaster management in the Ministry of Education, have become familiar with the basic concepts and terminologies in disaster management and preparedness planning. They now know how to mainstream disaster risk reduction in development planning and also mainstreaming gender in disaster risk management. They also acquired the basic skills on emergency response management and vulnerability assessment, all of which are very important in the context of Bhutan and in the backdrop of the ever increasing vulnerabilities to disasters.
* A multi-sector post disaster needs assessment preparedness process was supported in cooperation with the Department of Disaster Management. Lessons learnt from previous disaster were captured, and the Bhutan Disaster Assessment (BDA) tool developed. The BDA provides formats for collating key information after a disaster as well as “standard operating procedures” defining roles and responsibilities for how an assessment would be carried out. The assessment will contribute to understanding of the scope of the disaster, the external assistance required, the need for more detailed assessments and immediate priorities of affected populations. Building on recent assessment experience from other countries (most particularly the Pakistan McRAM), the BDA provides an assessment that is relevant to the Bhutanese context and owned by national stakeholders. The Bhutan Disaster Assessment tool is amongst the first post disaster assessment tools in the world to incorporate cultural aspects, in recognition of the recent experience from Bhutan, as well as from other countries, that culture plays a crucial role in the aftermath of a disaster.
* Providing technical support to the preparations and follow-up 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. Among others, the expertise of Bhutan in this area can serve as an example and best practice for the rest of the world. The recommendations of the conference will be taken up at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction organized by UNISDR in Geneva in May 2011.
* Supporting a 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.
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