

MoES/BTC Support to Skilling Uganda Project
Minutes of the Steering Committee meeting
13 September 2017
MoES – Embassy House

1. AGENDA

0. Introduction & reiteration of composition & tasks SC
1. Follow up on Special Partner Committee
 1. Monitoring matrix about gender policy and secure school environment
 2. Progress on planning for infrastructure components
 3. Follow-up on Procurement
 4. VAT payments by MoES
2. SSU Project
 1. Progress update (incl. follow-up of previous SC)
 2. Nakapiripirit land and management issues
 3. Validation of Infrastructure Plans for VTI-institutions
 4. Simplification of payments in co-management
 5. Inclusion of SSU-IRE supported institutions into SDHR project
 6. Modifications to Skills Development Fund Manual
 7. Budget modifications
 8. Policy issues such as financing and staffing of VTIs
3. AOB

2. OPENING REMARKS BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

The Chairperson, the Director Basic and Secondary Education welcomed the members and apologized on behalf of the PS who was held up by another engagement. The Chairperson then asked all members introduced themselves.

The Chair appreciated the good progress of BTC in Uganda in general and introduced the agenda of the meeting.

3. Follow up on Special Partner Committee

Following the Special Partner Committee (SPC), a meeting between Belgium and Uganda that is reviewing all projects, identified a number of issues for follow up:

- **Monitoring matrix of gender policy and secure school environment:** The matrix was presented and discussed by the members. The SC instructed the project to report quarterly to track the progress together with Gender Unit of the MOES.
- **Progress on planning for infrastructure components:** Discussion was deferred to the item further on the agenda of the meeting.
- **Follow-up on Procurement:** An update on the ongoing procurement processes was presented based on the provided list, with no further pending items to discuss.



- **VAT payments by MoES:** The Issue of the VAT payment was introduced and the meeting agreed that clarifications are required from Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) on the ramifications of the act amendment and follow up is needed on the pending payments of 32m UGX to ensure that this issue will not further stifle the project implementation

→ **SC decision:**

- (i) SSU to track progress on gender policy and secure school on a quarterly basis.
- (ii) MOES to follow up with the Ministry of Finance to receive confirmation on payment of 32m UGX of VAT.
- (iii) MOES to clarify with Ministry of Finance the VAT act amendment for future reference including co-management and own-management

4. Support to the Implementation of Skilling Uganda (SSU) project presentation

The Project Coordinator (PC) presented the progress of the SSU project.

Beforehand, the PC reminded the members of the composition of the SC reiterating the original composition and tasks as per the Technical and Financial File of the project (TFF) of 2015. Though as for the past year, the SC met at an Education Programme level, it was now reviewed back to the original composition to allow for more technical discussions on Skilling Uganda. In regard to the SC composition, two observations were made:

- Adding a representative of the Irish Embassy in Uganda as a non-voting member of the SC
- Recommending to include a voting seat to MoES in the SC (in addition to the chair)

In a brief presentation, the PC highlighted the progress in the implementation of the SSU project. For more details, he referred to the SSU 2017 progress report (in attachment). In general, he stated that SSU implementation is 'on track', excluding:

- a) Result 1 which is awaiting progress on a coordinated skills development entity in Uganda (for which a wider stakeholder workshop is under forthcoming and SSU is preparing all logistics with MOES).
- b) The issues listed further in the agenda for discussion (see below).

The Finance and Contracts Coordinator (FCC) introduced the financial progress, indicating that as per end of June 2017, the Belgian funded project component reached 11% expenditure and the Irish funded project 7%. Though this a low figure, it was clarified that it is within expectations as the majority of project expenditure is anticipated for 2018-2019 period, when the bulk of the infrastructure works is foreseen.

Following the presentation, the members discussed a number of issues including:

- (a) **Delays in infrastructure:** The accumulated 8-months delay in infrastructure process for the Albertine/Rwenzori was discussed by the meeting referring to unforeseen steps in procurement process, delays in payment as well as quality concerns as reasons for the delays. As a way forward, the setup of a Joint Taskforce was suggested to find mitigating measures to reduce delays (such as a moving construction works from Co-management to Own-management modality) by November 2017. The taskforce is to be chaired by the Education Programme Coordinator (EPC), with officers from SSU, TTE, CMU, PDU and BTJET department as members.

- (b) **City and Guilds assessment:** Members raised the importance of the benchmarking of the VTIs through a City and Guilds assessment. Since similar work is ongoing for other colleges within the MOES, it was suggested that SSU should follow it up with the BTJET department to find the most sustainable way forward.
- (c) **Karamojong in the VTIs in Karamoja:** Members noted that affirmative action is needed to get more Karamojong into the VTIs in the region, not only as students but also as instructors.
- (d) **Digitized tracer studies:** Members noted that tracing of BTJET graduates is key to understand impact of training conducted by training institutions in Uganda. It also acts as a feedback mechanism.
- (e) **Skills Development Fund (SDF):** Members noted and recognized the importance of the SDF pilot as well as the need to learn from the SDF training.
- (f) **Skills Development Entity:** Members also raised concern that the delays in Result one might affect the implementation of the other results

→ **SC decision:**

- (i) SC to add a representative of the Irish Embassy as a non-voting member & include a voting seat to MOES in the SC (in addition to the chair)
- (ii) MOES & BTC to follow up on delays in infrastructure via a joint task force to investigate mitigating measures to reduce delays (including a move of construction to own management (chaired by Education programme coordinator, SSU, TTE, CMU, PDU, BTJET) by November 2017.
- (iii) SSU & MOES to follow up on City & Guilds assessment for VTIs with ongoing programme within MOES

5. Discussion and SC decisions

1. Nakapiripirit land and management issues

Following the note, the SC discussed the pending issues of the Nakapiripirit VTI and the following was noted:

- BTJET and HRM department travelled to Nakapiripirit to investigate the issue of the Principal who had reportedly been dismissed by the district. The SC is now awaiting a report from the Commissioner of BTJET to confirm whether a new substantive Principal has been deployed and who the acting Principal is, so that he or she can act as the point of contact for the project.
- Prior discussions have also taken place on the issues of lack of a land title and need to connect the institute to the electricity grid at District and Ministry level. The SC requested the BTJET department to follow up and seek formalization of verbal commitments on land expansion and connection to electricity for the VTI.
- Formal and decisive documentation is urgently required; if not, the intervention will have to re-direct the funds.

→ **SC decision:**

- (i) Commissioner BTJET to share the investigation report and provide confirmation of the Principal by the end Sept 2017.
- (ii) Commissioner BTJET to liaise with District to fast track obtaining the land title and agreement on the expansion of land to 7ha.



(iii) Commissioner BTJET to initiate a letter to Ministry of Energy to ensure connection of the VTI to the electricity grid is expedited by Sept 2017.

2. Validation of Infrastructure Plans for VTI-institutions

Following the note, the SC discussed the allocation of the funds to the various VTIs in Albertine/Rwenzori.

- Upon request of the members, the project team gave a brief background on the thorough needs assessment that formed the basis for this allocation, including the development of bottom up business plans & HRD plans as well as the master plans and preliminary designs. On this basis, the suggested prioritization and budget allocation was agreed as per the note.
- The pending finalization of works by the IDB funded project at UTC Kyema was discussed. The members urged BTJET and CMU to look into the matter to ensure a prior finishing of works and seamless continuation towards works under SSU project.

→ SC decision:

- (a) SC validates the infrastructure prioritization as per the following allocation:
- (i) Kasese Youth Polytechnic (Estimated Budget Euro 1 million)
 - (ii) St. Joseph's Virika, Fort Portal (Estimated Euro 900,000)
 - (iii) ST. Simon VTC Hoima (Estimated Euro 1 million)
 - (iv) Millennium Business School Hoima (Estimated Euro 600,000)
 - (v) UTC Kyema Masindi (Estimated Euro 700,000)
- (b) The Commissioner BTJET and Assistant Commissioner, Construction management Unit (CMU) to convene a meeting to ensure a smooth closure of construction works at UTC Kyema under the IDB project and agree a way forward towards SSU construction works (by 1st week of October 2017)

3. Simplification of payments in co-management

Following the note on the issue, the SC agreed to remove the additional step in payment procedure.

→ SC decision:

MOES to take action and remove intermediate co-signature for the Assistant Commissioner Accountants.

4. Inclusion of SSU-IRE supported institutions into SDHR project

- The work of the BTC sister programme was introduced, including synergies as per the example of the 5 institutions in Western Uganda ranging from sharing of methodologies of self-assessment, development of business and HRD plans to joint implementation of work packages. Convinced of the benefits for the VTIs and since there are no adverse implications, the members agreed to expand this collaboration to the 2 VTIs in Karamoja, namely Saint Daniel Comboni and Nakapiririt VTI.

→ SC decision:

SC recommends to SDHR to adopt the 2 additional VTIs in Karamoja as beneficiaries of SDHR programme and continue to build synergies with the SSU project

5. Modifications to Skills Development Fund Manual

The PC introduced the work of the Skills Development Fund (SDF) selection committee as per the guidelines of the SDF manual. Following the first meeting of the SDF selection committee, the following items were discussed:

- Remuneration of the SDF committee members: The members raised caution on the issue of sitting allowances. In line with local development partners (LDPs'), BTC doesn't provide working fees for partners and beneficiaries. However, given the importance of the work of this selection committee, the SC agreed with the remuneration of the committee members on an exceptional basis and taking into consideration:
 - Unless part of normal work (e.g. representative of donors), and
 - In alignment with Public Service Standing Orders on constitution of committees and ad hoc committees as provided by the Ministry of Public Service.
- Guidance on alternate of members (in case the core member is withheld): In agreement
- Guidance on handover to another member if core members cease their seat: In agreement.
- Upgrading of the position from SDF officer to SDF manager, due to increased workload and responsibilities: was presented to the SC as BTC procedures don't allow upgrading (promotion). Change of level comes with a selection process. Decision was postponed until more justification is prepared.

→ SC decision:

- (i) In principle, agreement was reached on remuneration of the SDF Committee members in alignment with Public Service Standing Orders.
- (ii) Approved the adjustment to SDF procedures to allow constituencies appoint alternate SDF members and to allow handover to another member in case of termination of their membership

6. Budget modifications

The Finance and Contract Coordinator introduced the budget modification requests, explaining the need for:

- Rectification of a mistake in the budget of 25,000 EUR; and
- Allocation of a budget of 40,000 EUR for implementation of ERP system from travel budget

→ SC decision:

SC validates the following budget modifications:
SSU-IRE UGA160331T- Z_01_01 – 25.000 €=> Z_01_02 +25.000 €.
SSU-BE UGA14027111 to add 40.000€ to the budget line Z_02_03, coming from Z_03_03 (running cost vehicles).

7. Policy issues such as financing and staffing of VTIs

Following the note, a number of policy issues such as financing of running costs, staffing of colleges and the representation of the Private Sector at the governing councils was discussed by the SC members:

- The challenge in staffing levels of government VTIs (e.g. Nakapiripirit VTI, UTC Kyma, Kasese Youth Polytechnic) was discussed as well as the need to guarantee staffing to successfully implement SU strategy including sustaining the capacity building efforts. As this measure will have financial implications, it will require validation by the Ministry of Public Service and Finance. The development of a phased planning for recruitment of personnel was suggested.

- Ensured financing of regular running costs: Members agreed this was key to ensure sustainability of the intervention.
- 50% Private sector representation the governing councils of the VTIs was discussed, with a reference to similar debates as part of the World Bank funded USDP and ARSDP projects
- Tripartite MOUs between VTIs, MOES and SSU: Members agreed on the importance of MOUs to stipulate respective responsibilities and referred to existing guidelines

→ SC decision:

- Commissioner BTJET to provide progress report on recruitment of additional personnel for government VTIs under the SSU project.
- Commissioner BTJET to provide progress report on 50% private sector representation (by next SC).
- Joint task force, led by Education Programme Coordinator to develop tripartite MOUs between VTIs, MOES and SSU by the 1st week of October 2017

6. AOB & Closing remarks

No further issues were discussed. The Chair thanked all members and encouraged each to follow up on respective actions points.

7. ACTION POINTS

#	Action	Responsible	Deadline
1.	Track progress on gender policy and secure school on a quarterly basis	SSU PMT	Quarterly
2.	Follow up with Ministry of Finance to receive confirmation on payment of 32m UGX of VAT	MOES PS	ASAP
3.	Clarify with Ministry of Finance the VAT act amendment for future reference including co-management and own-management	MOES PS	ASAP
4.	Add a representative of the Irish Embassy as a non-voting member & include a voting seat to MOES in the SC (in addition to the chair)	SSU SC	Next SC
5.	Follow up on delays in infrastructure via a joint taskforce to investigate mitigating measures to reduce delays (including a move of construction to own management)	Joint Task Force chaired by Education Programme Coordinator, SSU, TTE, CMU, PDU, BTJET)	November 2017
6.	Follow up on City & Guilds assessment for VTIs with ongoing programme within MOES	SSU PMT	ASAP
7.	Share the investigation report and provide confirmation of the Principal of Nakapiripirit VTI	Commissioner BTJET	End of September 2017
8.	Liaise with Nakapiripirit District to fast track obtaining the land title and agreement on the expansion of land to 7ha	Commissioner BTJET	End of September 2017

9.	Initiate a letter to Ministry of Energy to ensure connection of Nakapiripirit VTI to the electricity grid.	Commissioner BTVET	End of September 2017
10.	Implement infrastructure prioritization as per the agreed allocation	SSU & CMU	November 2017
11.	Convene a meeting to ensure a smooth closure of construction works at UTC Kyema under the IDB project and agree a way forward towards SSU construction works	Assistant Commissioner CMU & Commissioner BTVET	by 1 st week of October 2017
12.	Remove intermediate co-signature for the Assistant Commissioner Accountant	MOES PS	September 2017
13.	Adopt the 2 additional VTIs in Karamoja as beneficiaries of SDHR programme and continue to build synergies with the SSU project	SDHR PMT & SC	ASAP
14.	Facilitate the SDF committee members as per the Public Service Standing Orders.	SSU PMT	Next SDF selection meeting
15.	Inform on change in guidelines and invite SDF members to appoint alternate for SDF members	SDF selection committee	Next SDF selection meeting
16.	Implement budget modification (see above)	SSU PMT	ASAP
17.	Provide progress report on recruitment of additional personnel for government VTIs under the SSU project.	Commissioner BTVET	Next SC
18.	Provide progress report on 50% private sector representation.	Commissioner BTVET	Next SC
19.	Develop tripartite MOUs between VTIs, MOES and SSU	Joint task force, led by Education Programme Coordinator	1 st week of October 2017

8. ATTENDANCE LIST

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17	Eliot Arinaitwe	Co-coordinator/ Economist MOES/SSU	0782797988	elitex03@yahoo.com
18	Sammy Auwerx	BTC, Finance & Contracting Coordinator	0784688766	sammy.auwerx@btcctb.org
19	Thierry Foubert	BTC, TA – co-coordinator SSU	0772653626	Thierry.foubert@btcctb.org

9. ATTACHMENTS

- SSU 2017 project progress report

- preparatory notes on following issues:


1. Monitoring matrix about gender policy and secure school environment
2. Progress on planning for infrastructure components
3. Follow-up on Procurement
4. VAT payments by MoES
5. Nakapiripirit land and management issues
6. Validation of Infrastructure Plans for VTI-institutions
7. Simplification of payments in co-management
8. Inclusion of SSU-IRE supported institutions into SDHR project
9. Modifications to Skills Development Fund Manual
10. Budget modifications
11. Policy issues such as financing and staffing of VTIs



10 . SIGNATURES

Minutes approved by:


Mr. R. Nsumba Lyazi
Director Basic and Secondary
Education, MOES


Sign & Date: 22/09/2017

Ms Christelle Jocquet
BTC Resident Representative


Sign & Date: 20/09/17

Ms. Angella Rwabutomize
Principal Economist, MOFPED


Sign & Date: 22nd/09/2017

