

NOTIFICATION OF DELAY OF PROJECT OR PROGRAMME INCEPTION

*Notification of delay of project/programme start (As per Decision B.18/29, for concrete adaptation projects/programmes, the Board decided to consider the start date to be **the first day of the project/ programme's inception workshop**)*

Implementing Entity Name: World Food Programme			
AF Project/programme ID: GMB/MIE/Rural/2019/1			
Project/programme Title: The Gambia, Republic of The - Rural Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resilience Building Project (RICAR)			
Country(ies): The Gambia			
Project/Programme Approval (date)	March 2021 - Decision B.35-36/23		
Expected Project/programme Start (date)	March 2022	Proposed Revised Completion (date):	February 2027

1. Reasons/ justification for delay in the project's/programme's inception and the number of months of delay from the project approval date

The inception workshop for the RICAR project was originally planned for December 2021, with the aim to start activities from January 2022. However there has been delays due to the following:

1. The operational partnership between WFP as the implementing entity and MECCNAR as the executing entity is new for both partners in the country. Significant time was dedicated by both parties in the setup phase to understand the partner's rules, guidelines and quality assurance and other processes. An MoU has been developed and approved to set out the legal responsibilities of each of the agencies within the RICAR project, and Standard Operating Procedures have been developed and approved to layout the practical implementation arrangements between WFP and MECCNAR including staffing, financial/ narrative reporting and project management. The negotiation of these legal documents took longer than expected. In addition, as a pre-requisite to the finalization of the MOU and SOP, an assessment of MECCNAR procurement rules and procedure had to be carried out in accordance with AF requirements to understand MECCNAR procurement rules and procedures and to what extent these comply with WFP quality assurance thresholds. The procurement assessment has been finalized and the recommendations have been recently approved by all parties, unlocking the signature of the MOU and SOP.
2. The process was further slowed down in October and November due to the absence of most the key staff of MECCNAR and focal points for this project, who attended the COP26 summit in Glasgow.
3. Finally, national elections were held in early December 2021 in The Gambia, with key government stakeholders unable to attend the proposed inception workshop dates due to competing priorities at the time. Additionally due to the potential political unrest from the elections, many agencies (government, non-government and UN) adopted preparedness measures such as reduced travel and avoidance of large gathering.

Therefore, the project is requesting to delay the inception workshop date to March 2022 to allow the election/ holiday period to close and for WFP and MECCNAR to finalize the remaining inception activities

before the workshop is held.

2. Approaches/ mitigation measures to ensure the start of implementation

Due to a peaceful election and the incumbent winning the elections there is unlikely to be any unexpected political violence or strategic changes within any of the government agencies. With the finalization and approval of the legal agreements between MECCNAR and WFP, it is expected that additional staffing support can be assigned to the finalization of project inception activities. The recruitment of the Technical Adviser is being finalized by WFP. This staff will be seconded to the RICAR project management unit in MECCNAR and will allow for additional staff support to be provided to the organization of the inception workshop.

3. Challenges (in addition to those mentioned in section 1) that may extend the project/ programme completion date)

The recent resurgence of COVID globally due to new strains has raised potential challenges, with the Government putting additional travel restrictions for people arriving to the Gambia as of 10th December 2021. Additionally some WFP staff are on leave during late December period, however sufficient measures and cover has been put in place to not allow any delays towards the project.

Implementing Entity certification

This notification for delay on project/programme inception has been prepared in accordance with Adaptation Fund policies and procedures, and delay on project/programme start has been agreed by participating executing entities and has been notified to the designated authority(ies) (DA).

Name & Signature:

Yasuhiro Tsumura, Country Director and Representative



Project/programme contact person: Adam McVie

Date: (Month, Day, Year)
December, 15, 2021

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