

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: AF00000165			
Project/programme Title: Strengthening the adaptive capacities of climate-vulnerable communities in the Goascorán watershed of El Salvador and Honduras through integrated community-based adaptation practices and services			
Country(ies): El Salvador, Honduras			
Project/Programme Approval (date)	October 2022 (Decision B.39/35)		
Expected Project/programme Start (date)	01 August 2024	Proposed Revised Completion (date):	31 July 2029

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 project inception has encountered an unforeseen delay, mainly because of the process of developing the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with the Executing Entities that has taken longer than anticipated due to the complex processes involved in reviewing and obtaining signatures. However, there are steady progress:

- In Honduras, following the review by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (SERNA) carried out in 2023, crucial parallel reviews have taken place to align the project with the new government's strategic approach to climate change resilience within the NDCs and the National Climate Agenda and SERNA's interest to manage procurement and recruitment processes. This will ensure long-term project sustainability and foster proper ownership, especially beyond the project's completion. SERNA, as Executing Entity and AF Designated Authority, considers important to strengthen their institutional capacity to manage part of the procurement and recruitment processes of the Project through their own Project Coordination Office. Consequently, SERNA requested WFP to change the Direct Project Services (DPS) arrangements. In line with this request, WFP has collaborated with SERNA to undergo a capacity assessment, collecting additional information on its procurement and recruitment processes in order to ensure that the necessary coordination mechanism is in place between Implementing and Executing Entities, to allow for an adequate and timely project implementation, aligning with national laws and WFP and Adaptation Fund standards. Additionally, in line with SERNA's request, WFP has carried out a budget and programmatic distribution analysis to identify which specific activities would go under SERNA's or WFP's management for the procurement of goods and services as well as recruitment. Both the capacity assessment report, the budget distribution analysis, together with no-objection letters by SERNA and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) of El Salvador will be part of the formal request to the AF Board Secretariat by the end of February 2024, for a formal decision regarding these changes in DPS requested by SERNA. It is important to note

that this request does not foresee any changes in the project activities, budget, implementation plan or the Implementing Entity Fee.

- In El Salvador, the documents corresponding to the SOP and MoU were reviewed by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) and the El Salvador International Cooperation Agency (ESCO), securing approval for their signatures.

WFP is actively working with the relevant authorities of SERNA to speed up reviewing and negotiating the terms and conditions in the documents. However, the context explained above is expected to delay finalizing and signing the SOP and MOUs with governments and, consequently, delaying the development of the inception workshop.

It is estimated that an additional 6 months will be required to finalize negotiations and progress in signing agreements with both governments and related actions. This includes the submission of the changes in the DPS arrangements requested by the Government of Honduras for AF Board approval through its Secretariat. Thus, the new proposed start date of the project is **August 1, 2024**. Please refer to Annex 1 for a proposed list of milestones and dates for the next 6 months.

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

To ensure that the project starts within the proposed timeframe, the following measures will be considered:

- In El Salvador, WFP is actively collaborating with relevant authorities to expedite document reviews and define governance and implementation arrangements. The SOP and MoU documents (and their annexes) are being revised and updated to incorporate the modifications that have been requested by SERNA in recent months. On the other hand, a meeting has been convened with MARN to update them on the current situation and the steps to be taken to achieve a successful conclusion of this document preparation phase.
- In Honduras, WFP has diligently worked together with SERNA's Project Coordination Office to finalize the procurement and recruitment capacity assessment to produce a detailed report with recommendations and potential risk mitigation measures. In addition, the revision of the SOP and MoU is ongoing and will incorporate the relevant elements arising from the Capacity Assessment and the budget distribution analysis.

Additionally, WFP is strengthening communication and coordination, establishing regular check-ins with stakeholders to address any emerging challenges promptly. This strategic approach is designed to enhance transparency and maintain alignment with project objectives.

Besides, to address the additional potential challenges mentioned in section 3, the project contemplates a robust risk management plan, regularly reviewing, and updating it to incorporate any emerging threats. WFP, as part of the Project Steering Committee (PSC), will ensure biannual updates and validation of the risk management plan, ensuring that the Executing Entities and other members of the PSC agree on an integrated risk mitigation strategy that involves all stakeholders. This proactive stance will enable us to navigate unforeseen hurdles and ensure timely project completion.

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

programme completion date)

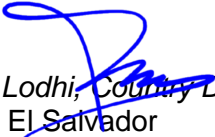
Other factors that could affect the timely implementation and achievement of project objectives by the completion date may include:

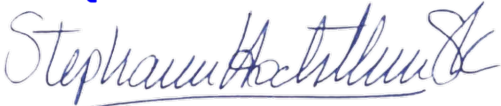
- Unforeseen regulatory changes, shifts in political landscapes, or external factors related to extreme weather events.

WFP is committed to working diligently with both MARN in El Salvador and SERNA in Honduras, to ensure effective cooperation to allow the project to meet its objectives according to the approved workplan. This approach will involve an inclusive coordination approach with key stakeholders in both Governments and in the binational watershed.

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).


Riaz Lodhi, Country Director
WFP El Salvador


Stephanie Hochstetter, Country Director
WFP Honduras

Date: February 1st, 2024

Tel. and Email:

riaz.lodhi@wfp.org / +503 2507 1757

stephanie.hochstetter@wfp.org / +504 3173-8575

Annex 1

Project Pre-Inception Milestones in the next 6 months

1. Documentation sent to AF Board Secretariat for approval of DPS changes requested by SERNA	26 February 2024
2. Official feedback of draft MOU and SOP received from SERNA	15 March 2024
3. Official feedback of draft MOU and SOP received from MARN	15 March 2024
4. MOUs and SOPs reviewed and with feedback by WFP HQ Legal	12 April 2024
5. AF Board Approval of DPS Changes Requested by SERNA	15 April 2024 <i>(expected, TBC)</i>
6. Potential changes to MOUs and SOP received from AF Board Secretariat incorporated into documents and sent for final review by MARN and SERNA	19 April 2024
7. Technical Pre-Inception workshop in the field, with MARN, SERNA and WFP ESV and WFP HON.	25 April 2024
8. Official feedback and approval of MOUs and SOP received from MARN and SERNA	9 May 2024
9. Request for full powers of attorney for MOU and SOP signature by MARN <i>(can take up to two months)</i>	10 May 2024
10. Inception Workshop and approval and signing of MOUs and SOP by MARN and SERNA	01 Aug 2024 <i>(at the latest, but aiming to do it in mid-July)</i>