

REPORT ON THE KURON ROAD PROJECT

This report summarizes the finding from the visit of Oddvar Espegren and Åsbjørn Skaaland to the project during the time period from 18th to 29th April 2016.

STATUS

- The contractor has mobilized most of the necessary machinery and equipment to a site close to Lokuruwa River. 38 men are being allocated to the project under the guidance of engineer Peter Oydomo. Compactor will be brought to the site in the near future
- By 24th April when the team passed the contractor's project site area, about 6 km of road had been cleared by the contractor on the east side of the river and 3 km on the western side, uprooting trees and bushes.
- The passing and embankments for the new river crossing structure had been excavated and was passable by cars. Excavation for the base gabions would start as soon as the gabions arrived.
- There remains approximately 11 km according to the contractor engineer before the new road connects with the old road to Kuron.
- Fuel and gabions are currently the most critical physical inputs at the moment in order to complete the bridge before the rainy season. Some gabions (approx. 25) were found at the Peace Village and the bridge building can be initiated using these when they are brought to the construction site, and while the remaining 75 is being provided. A fuel consignment is said to be arriving from Kitale, Uganda but arrival time is for the moment uncertain. As of 29 April the fuel had still not arrived and alternative sourcing is sought
- The project contract was on the arrival still not signed – but a draft was discussed during the visit and completed with a work progress plan, reporting schedules and diagrams. When the contractor provides his account number in Stanbic Bank the contracts is ready to be signed.
- The contract for the second tranche with IOM is still not ready but the commitment to provide USD 400 000 was confirmed in a meeting with them 26 April. IOM will speed up the preparation of the necessary documentation. IOM stressed the need to present complete documentation – failing so would delay disbursement.
- IOM will regularly send their engineers to control that the work is complying with agreed standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- At the time of departure the work is at standstill for several days due to lack of fuel. This issue must urgently be resolved in order to start the work again and possibly complete the work before the rainy season hampers implementation.
- Immediate efforts should be made to provide additional financing for rehabilitation of the bad road between the start of the project road and the good road from the junction

Kapoeta - Narus road so that this may be improved while the contractor has his machinery in the area.



Existing Lokuruwa river crossing - at flooding the river is flooding over the embankments

- While the contractor is at work additional financing for Kuron - Boma should be sought - capitalizing on machinery and equipment already at the location. IOM will look at the quality of work implemented as criteria for additional work financing
- Stephen Kyolo - IOM should be named as the project assigned engineer. This engineer has negotiated the project so far and will be visiting the road project regularly. He is based in Juba and has frequent travels to the project site. Together with the Project Manager they should be able to secure satisfactory implementation.
- Based on the concept of gabion-bridge, at least 3 steel drainage tubes should be placed at middle height of the bridge structure in order to increase flow capacity and create turbulence that will extract sediments upstream when the flow is at its highest.
- Documenting the use of funds is in this project critical for rapid implementation. Systems should be established to bring reporting up to required levels of professionalism.

BACKGROUND FOR THE MISSION

The Norwegian Friends group was given the impression that a project of € 800 000 was awarded for the road project and that the project would be implemented in the period up to

September 2016. A proposal was made and accepted by the Peace Village, to provide a road engineer to support the implementation of the road project with intermittent visits to the project every second month.



Excavation of the new river crossing where a gabion bridge will be constructed

A mission comprising of Åsbjørn Skaaland, Road Engineer and the earlier Director for the Peace Village Oddvar Espegren as contact facilitator, took place from 18 to 29.4 and included road travel to Kuron accompanied by the contractor. Stops were made at the contractor's depot in Torit and the project camp at Lokuruwa River.



The excavated new crossing of the river where the gabion bridge will be constructed

The team returned to Juba 26.4 for meetings with the IOM, the Bishop and the contractor. Formalities like acceptable bank accounts and reporting details were negotiated and established. The contract with the contractor was signed 29 April 2016.

FINDINGS

It was soon realized that the project actually had a financial frame of € 400 000 and that the project was planned implemented in one and a half to two month. Additionally the IOM engineer had been participating extensively in the preparation of the project and was well updated of all issues and assigned by IOM to follow up the implementation. It was hence very natural that he also was appointed as the assigned engineer for HTPV providing a much better solution than remote control from Norway.



The new 6 km road under construction connecting the new Lokuruwa river crossing

In a meeting in Kuron between the Contractor and the HTPV the contractual agreement was discussed, amended and the final version agreed – ready to be signed. Some project documents for the implementation were needed to be added.

In the meeting with IOM, they informed the meeting that the disbursement was held back due to missing and unacceptable documentation of the earlier disbursement. This situation is causing unproductive strain on all parties. Remedial action is urgently needed.

The contractor is well equipped with suitable and relatively new equipment that can complete the work successfully but lack of payment causing lack of fuel is stopping the work progress.

At a meeting at the contractors project site near Lokuruwa River the design of the gabion-bridge was discussed. It was suggested that at least 3 of the leftover drain-tubes along the highway should be incorporated about mid height to ease the flow when the water level is high as well as create turbulence that will suck in sediments and maintain the gabion structure better especially during peak flooding giving a longer service life of the crossing.

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Collected



The contractor with his car and bulldozer on the newly cleared road section 6 km from Lokuruwa river

There is still a fair chance that the road can be successfully completed but it requires prompt action from the HTPV side and particularly on the accounting and documentation capacities. Norwegian Friend could play an active role here.

Åsbjørn Skaaland

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The stones collected by women under the Food for Work Programme