



22 July 2022

Dear Mr. Oudkerk,

Request for Substantive Revision and Costed Extension – Amerindian Land Titling Project

Pursuant to our communication of 21 January 2022 on the request for continuity of the Amerindian Land Titling (ALT) Project while the substantive revision paper is being prepared, UNDP in joint submission with the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MOAA), hereby tenders this request for revision and costed extension for an additional three (3) years beyond the project end date of 31 December 2021. The proposed end date for the project therefore is 31 December 2024 and the additional cost envisaged is US\$2,470,380, thereby giving a total budget of US\$8,650,737 for the period January 2022 and December 2024. This extension will allow for the full achievement of the original project objectives, thus enabling the Government of Guyana to realize its commitment to providing legal land tenure for indigenous peoples.

1. Context

The objective of the ALT Project is to enable Amerindians to secure their lands and natural resources with a view towards sustainable social and economic development. It is expected that titling of communities will strengthen land tenure security and the expansion of the asset base of Amerindians, thereby enabling improved long-term planning for future development.

Implementation of the ALT commenced in October 2013 for a three (3) year period. In October 2016, a no-cost extension for an additional two (2) years was granted. To facilitate a project board review, consultations and ensuing recommendations from key stakeholders, two short term extensions for the periods October 2018 to December 2018 and January 2019 to March 2019 were obtained. The resultant second substantial extension of the project was approved for the period April 2019 to December 2021.

In addition to the no cost extension in April 2019, the project scope was revised as follows:

Table 1: Comparison of Original and Revised ALT Project Scope

Output	Original Target (2013)	Revised Target (2019)	Change
Output 1:	45 Absolute Grants issued. 68 Demarcations completed.	26 Absolute Grants issued. 39 Demarcations completed. 40 investigations completed.	Absolute grants reduced by 19. Demarcations reduced by 29. Investigation now stated as a target (was always included in scope).
Output 2:	210 persons trained in mediation.	419 persons trained in mediation.	209 additional persons to be trained.
Output 3	Revised communication strategy. 68 villages reached.	Revised communication strategy. 68 villages reached.	Number of villages was not reduced as investigations are expected to be completed in all that were initially planned.
Output 4:	-	ALT Unit institutionalized in the Ministry.	ALT Unit institutionalized in the Ministry.

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cc: Project Board Members

The underlying reasons for the revised targets were:

- a. The objective of demarcating and titling of 68 communities was assessed as being overly ambitious. While the target was reduced to 39, it was anticipated that should the project resources and timeline allow for the demarcation of more than the revised target, this would be a welcomed achievement; and
- b. To facilitate the institutional sustainability of Amerindian Land Titling, the Implementing Partner requested support for the establishment of a permanent unit in the Ministry.

2. Achievements 2013 – 2021

Over the period 2013 to 2021, a total of 13 Absolute Grants were issued to Indigenous Communities and 23 Demarcations were completed.

Table 2: Annual Achievements of Absolute Grants and Demarcations

Activity	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Absolute Grants issued	6	2	0	0	0	5	0	0	13
Demarcations completed	8	9	2	1	0	1	0	2	23

3. Implementation Challenges

- a. Notwithstanding the initial slow start of the project, 2015 saw a change in the Executive and thereafter several changes to the project management team of the ALT Unit that resulted in a reduced pace of project activity.
- b. Based on the Presidential Delegation of Authority to the Commissioner of Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission (GLSC) during the period August 2016 to August 2020, there were delays in approval of Ministerial submissions for titling of Amerindian Lands. The Commissioner objected to the ALT Guidelines; “A Guideline for Amerindian Land Titling in Guyana”, which was finalized and endorsed by the Project Board and adopted by both the Implementing Partner and the UNDP in 2017. The guidelines prescribes that an Absolute Grant, accompanied by a certified copy of the Special Provisions Plan / Grant Plan, which is endorsed by the GLSC, precedes the Cadastral Survey and Demarcation exercise. That is, Absolute Grants would be issued prior to Demarcation and the ‘save and except’ any encumbrances clause will be included on the grant plan, if there were any such encumbrances. Objections raised by the GLSC on this sequence of actions, that were approved by the Project Board where GLSC sits as a member, resulted in the process being reversed. A revision of the guidelines was approved by the Project Board in May 2018¹; The abovementioned challenges resulted in only one demarcation being completed in 2019.
- c. Delays in finalizing letters of agreement (LoA) for demarcation of villages – the submissions from the GLSC were not sufficiently detailed to allow for value for money analyses. This resulted in no demarcations in 2020.
- d. Political stalemate lasting for 20 months from December 2018 to August 2020 when a new Government was appointed. This negatively and significantly affected the pace of project implementation.
- e. Delays in project implementation was also exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Containment measures to stymie the spread of the virus limited travels and access to Indigenous Communities for investigations, sensitization, surveying and demarcations of village lands.

4. Approach to Challenges

The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs has the renewed commitment and support of its main implementing partner, the Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission. The Senior Management of the GLSC possesses very strong technical and institutional knowledge of the ALT Project and is committed to partnering with the Ministry to achieve the objectives and targets within the specified extended time.

¹ Minutes of the ALT Project Board Meeting held 25 May 2018 document this decision of the Project Board.

The GLSC has committed to fast-tracking the demarcation activities through outsourcing, where required, in order to survey several communities simultaneously. This approach will accelerate the rate of project implementation. In addition, should the need arise the MOAA is also prepared to consider, with the support of the GLSC and the Ministry of Finance, the option of pre-qualifying certified surveyors who can then be utilized by the GLSC to conduct demarcation exercises.

The Government of Guyana is reverting to processing land titling as it was done prior to the change in the ALT Guidelines in 2018. Therefore, Absolute Grants will be followed by demarcation exercises and lastly the issuance of Certificates of Titles.

5. Achievements 2021

With the 2021 Annual Work Plan approved in July, the following were achieved as at 31 December 2021.

Table 3: Achievements of the ALT Project in 2021

Activity	Original Project Target (2013)	Revised Project Target (2019)	Project Achievement (as at 2020)	2021 Target	2021 Achievements / Remarks	
Absolute Grants issued	45	26	13 ²	4	0	Two (2) Cabinet Papers submitted for consideration. Absolute Grants ³ issued in early 2022.
Demarcations completed	68	39	21 ⁴	6	2 ⁵	Five (5) Letters of Agreement signed for demarcation. Two (2) surveys completed by 31 December 2021; 3 completed in 2022.
Investigations completed	-	40	40	-	-	Not stated as a target in 2021 AWP.
Mediation Training	210	419	449	125	94	94 Amerindians, from 5 regions trained in mediation skills by December 2021.
Communication Strategy Finalized	1	1	0	1	1	Strategy finalized.

In 2021, the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs signed Letters of Agreement (LOAs) with the Guyana Lands and Survey Commission (GLSC) for the demarcation of five (5) villages namely: St. Monica (Region 2), Mainstay (Regions 2); Yupukari (Region 9); Kangaruma (Region 7) and Tassarene (Region 7). These were all scheduled to be completed by December 2021. The sixth planned village, Karasabai, could not have been signed based on the timeline for completion falling outside of the Project end date of 31 December 2021. Two surveys were fully completed in 2021 and the remaining three were achieved in early 2022.

² 2014 – Batavia, Sawairwau, Karisparu, Kariako, Tusseneg, Katoonarib; 2015 – Kambaru, Four Miles; 2019 – Tassarene, Kangaruma, Mainstay, St. Monica, Yupukari.

³ Capoey Ext.; Mashabo Ext.

⁴ 2014 – Sawairwau, Katoonarib, Kamana, Manawarin, Waramuri, Kurukabaru, Massara, Yakarinta; 2015 – Batavia, Karisparu, Kariako, Taruka, Kato, Rivers View, Rupunau, Baramita, Konashen; 2016 – Tusseneng, Chinoweng; 2017 – Four Miles; 2019 – Paramakatoi.

⁵ 2021 – Mainstay, St. Monica

6. Proposed Revised Targets (January 2022 – December 2024)

The Government has signalled and demonstrated its continued interest in the welfare of the indigenous peoples of Guyana, including their right to access land. More specifically, the acceleration of implementation of the ALT Project has been one of the priorities of the MOAA. In the 2021 Budget Speech, the Executive signaled its commitment to advance the Amerindian Land Titling project to provide titles to the original 68 villages, reflected in its groundwork.

The attached substantive revision document, including the results and resources framework (attachment 1), revised multi-year workplan (attachment 2), updated risk register (attachment 3) and updated socio-environmental screening (attachment 4) are based on the following proposed revision to the project scope:

Table 4: Proposed Revision of the ALT Project Scope

Output	Original Target as a October 2013	Revised Target as at March 2019	Proposed Revised Target for Project (2022)	Remarks
Output 1:	45 Absolute Grants issued. 68 Demarcations completed.	26 Absolute Grants issued. 39 Demarcations completed. 40 investigations completed.	45 Absolute Grants issued. 68 Demarcations completed. 52 Investigations completed.	The MOAA & the Implementing Partner wish to revert to the original commitment to the Amerindian Peoples of Guyana, thus completing 68 demarcations and issuing 45 absolute grants to the villages mentioned in the original project document by December 2024. In addition, the MOAA and the Implementing Partner wish to keep the number of investigations completed as a Project target and revise that from 40 to 52 investigations.
Output 2:	210 persons trained in mediation.	419 persons trained in mediation.	700 persons trained in mediation.	As of 31 December 2021, 543 persons were trained. An additional 157 persons trained in mediation is proposed bringing the end of project target to 700.
Output 3:	Revised communication strategy. 68 villages reached.	Revised communication strategy. 68 villages reached.	Revised communication strategy. 68 villages reached.	No changes.
Output 4:	-	ALT Unit institutionalized in the Ministry.	2 GIS software licences purchased and in use. 2 staff trained in GIS. ALT Unit institutionalized in the Ministry.	The MOAA and the Implementing Partner wish to have basic GIS training for its technical staff. Institutionalization of an ALT Unit in the MOAA remains a project target.

7. Financial Status of the ALT Project

The following table captures the financial position of the project and the proposed allocations for the period 2022 and 2024 to achieve the proposed revised targets delineated above:


	Original Budget (2013)	Expenditure to Dec-21	Balance on Original Budget	Proposed Budget (Jan 2022 - Dec 2024)	Additional funds required
Output 1	6,547,000	2,152,897	4,394,103	6,579,000	2,184,897
Output 2	418,250	343,938	74,312	19,500	-54,812
Output 3	993,000	301,046	691,954	77,500	-614,454
Output 4	0	4,085	-4,085	16,100	20,185
Project Management and GMS	2,797,740	1,773,667	1,024,073	1,958,637	934,564
Total	10,755,990	4,575,633	6,180,357	8,650,737	2,470,380

UNDP therefore wishes to submit this request for a substantive revision, that brings the project back to its original targets and ensures sustainability of land titling under the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, at an additional cost of two million four hundred and seventy thousand, three hundred and eighty United States dollars (USD2,470,380) over a period of three years (January 2022 – December 2024).

We look forward to a favourable decision.

Yours sincerely,

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Margaret Jones Williams
Officer-in-Charge