

ANNEX 2
STANDARD TEMPLATE
QUARTERLY REPORT UPDATE

Name of the Asia-wide Programme : Asia-Invest Programme	
Contract reference no.: CN/ASIA-INVEST/038 (128109)	
Project Title: Bridging the gap among local people and global tourism business	
Name of Beneficiary: COSPE (Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei Paesi Emergenti)	
Period covered by this Quarterly Update: 18th April 2008 – 15 July 2008	
Due date of this Quarterly Update: July 2008	
<i>Project Budget</i>	<i>EUR 341.097,97</i>
<i>Funds Disbursed by Commission to date (arrival date: 11/09/2007)</i>	<i>EUR 103.637,26</i>
<i>Expenditure Incurred by Project to date</i>	<i>EUR 41.030,95</i>

The Quarterly Updates will include concise information on the work carried out over the 3 preceding months (a max. of 2 pages). It should be coherent with the relevant work plan and any divergence should be highlighted and explained. The Update will also include brief information on the project expenditure.

I. Introduction

Since the last report, Asian partners have started working on the itineraries by exploring potentially suitable territories and the availability of human resources; in particular people to be involved in capacity building activities have been identified and in some cases trained. In the period considered by this Quarterly Report the partners concentrated their effort mainly on the activities 3, 4, 5 and in some cases they moved activity number 7 earlier with the production of informative material.

II. Implementation of Activities

Activity 2: Asian responsible tourism – best practices collection

The final research on best practices will be completed and put on the bridge-it webpage by the end of July.

Activity 3: Training for trainers and local sensitisation of target groups

After the training, the Bridge-it help-desk has completed the CID-methodology (taught during the TOT week in Florence) by designing the budgeting-tool with which the partners will be able to calculate local and final costs of their itineraries. This tool is supposed to help during the itinerary-construction in order to keep costs under control and to make consequent cost-effective choices in the design of the itineraries itself. The helpdesk is currently working on the user-guide for the toolkit that will be sent within the next weeks as to guarantee proper and homogeneous use of the tool.

Meetings and visits to local communities have been carried out in Nepal, Mongolia and China with the purpose of promoting the project and identifying the target groups to be involved in the training.

Activity 4: Capacity building and training activities for staff of Asian SMEs and Intermediary Organisation

As decided during TOT, the partners continued with the identification of itineraries, on the basis of which they will carry out training activities. At the same time several meetings have been organized in order to identify target groups and possible partnerships within the project.

The Nepalese partner organized some visits to all project districts/regions to assess the willingness of local communities (Budha, Bhote, Lama, Magar, Tharu, Raji, Kash, Achhami and Thakali communities) to take part to the project and to know their level of participation in the various sectors of responsible tourism. In Kathmandu some tour operators and tour experts, have been approached for a preliminary discussion about the project. Priority has been given to tour operators who are well versed with European tourists and have excellence in European language. The screening of the participants for capacity building exercise is still ongoing. In the project districts Local SMEs (i.e. hotels, camping sites, restaurants handicrafts manufactures at community and company level, community forest groups, garden and lake management committees, traditional & cultural groups) have been approached for their participation in workshop and later in capacity building programs. A workshop for the target groups was to be organized, but due to the heavy monsoon and prime harvest season, the majority of the target groups faced difficulty to spare adequate time to participate. For this reason it has been rescheduled, and it will be held in August 2008 in all project districts.

The Xiang Yuan You staff (from China) has organized several meetings; in particular in the city of Jishou with the representatives of the University of Ethnography and of the Ethnographic Museum, in the pile-dwelling village Wenchao of the minority Tujia and in Changsha with the governmental authorities.

The MAS staff (from Mongolia) has been participating to a number of festivals and initiatives: the "Ondor Dov" (Mandshir temple), "Culture Naadam" Nomad Arts Festival, "Tsaan" festival (Hovsgol province).

The Mongolian partner, co-operating with "Mazaalai tour an Expedition" Company has already identified several suitable itineraries: from Khukh Burd through the beautiful places such as Baga Gazriin chuluu, Sangiin Dalai, Gurvan Saikhan, Yoliin am, Bayan saikhan Ulaan ereg, Ongi temple, Elsen tasarhai Hustain Nuruu etc. In addition to that they selected the tour guide, manager, driver and other related staffs who started the training activities. Moreover MAS signed a contract with "Great Khan" Tours Company and started to work on several itineraries (with the training of 30 local people).

Activity 5: Identification of itineraries and other responsible tourism products and their technical verification

BIRD (from Nepal) is working on the development of two itineraries from Dolpa, two from Kailali and one from Mustang territories/districts.

The Mongolian partner already identified 5 existing tourist itineraries that might be adapted to the needs and criteria of the project. Moreover, the partner has identified and roughly designed three new itineraries (of 7, 10 and 14 days). The itineraries cover the regions Hentiy, Tuv, Bulgan, Uvurhanga, Dundgovi (Middle Gobi), Umnu Govi (South Gobi) and envisage a variety of activities, accommodation structures and local involvement.

Chinese partners have been working extensively on a first itinerary: Beijing, Zhangjiajie, Fenghuang and minority villages (using the methodology of the country package..) and other itineraries are also in progress toward settlement. Cospe collaborator Wang Hakni (Huang Heini) arrived in China the 15th of May for the verification mission in Hunan. The mission has been necessarily moved up so as to verify:

- some bureaucratic problems: tour operators with international partnerships must pay high new taxes not previewed;
- any damage on the infrastructures (streets and bridges connecting Zhanjiajie airport with Fenghuang and its surroundings), which could have been caused because of the proximity to the area of the earthquake occurred last May;
- new opportunities for strenghten partnerships with Jishou University and Museum;
- opportunities for new partnerships with other Italian and European organizations operating in China.

The Bridge-it helpdesk has revised the material concerning the itineraries and sent back comments for further improvement. Asian partners are expected to submit 5 complete itinerary proposals each and the training programmes for the local capacity building within the 31st of August.

Activity 7: task 7.1 Promotional material design

MAS published more than four hundred guide brochures for tourists and distributed them to tourist companies, embassies, tourist information centers, and other famous companies and organizations including the Academy of Science.

III. Partnership

Information on the functioning of the Partnership should be provided here:

- *What has been the main role of each partner in implementing the activities described?*
- *What have been the main strength and weaknesses of the partnership during this period?*

Partnership relationships are very good, and they have been reinforced compared to the beginning of the project thanks to the TOT week, to the help desk service and the frequent email correspondence. For example partners collaboration has played a key role for the production of documentation material (texts, photos...) about Nepal, Mongolia and China, which has been placed on the Bridge-it webpage.

University of Florence and Cospe organized several meetings, in particular for verifying the possibility of internships for undergraduates within the project.

IV. Methodology

The methodology applied was the one described in the project.

V. Other Issues

- *Mention any other issues you deem relevant*

Cospe collaborator Wang Hakni is going to meet, during her stay in Peking, representatives of other Italian associations which are working in China within cooperation programmes (i.e. "Amici dei Bambini" association) to verify if and how to place our project in synergy with their activities.