UNDP Management Response
Support to the Comprehensive Agricultural Census in the Republic of Armenia
(Phase 1: Support to the Pilot Phase of the Agricultural Census and Phase 2: Support to the Full Scale Agricultural Census)

Evaluation Date: April, 2017

Prepared by: Anna Melkonyan — Position: Project Coordinator — Unit/Bureau: UNDP/Armenia
Cleared by: Dmitry Mariyasin — Position: Deputy Resident Representative in Armenia — Unit/Bureau: UNDP/Armenia
Input into and update in ERC: Armine Hovhannisyan — Position: Program Associate — Unit/Bureau: UNDP/Armenia

Overall comments: According to the Project Evaluation both phases of the project intervention were accomplished as planned in an effective and efficient manner. The technical consultant inputs were timely and beneficial to advance all aspects of the census and provided on-the-job training. The out-of-country visits and the use of regional consultants contributed to better training and a view to the future. The cooperation and collaboration between a strong government counterpart and cooperating development partners contributed to the success. With the gains made to date, it is recommended that the further interventions and future support in the area of agricultural statistics be focused on 1. consistency of data, 2. improving use of agricultural sector data, and 3. census cycle of activity. These recommendations are in line with the priorities of the National Statistical Service of Armenia (NSS) to further enhance the rural and agricultural statistics in Armenia and are addressed by the Project and NSS.

Evaluation Recommendation 1: The further interventions should be focused on the consistency of data.

Management Response: This recommendation is in line with the priorities of the National Statistical Service of Armenia to further enhance the rural and agricultural statistics in Armenia. The implementation of the first-ever Agricultural Census ensured the availability of reliable, comprehensive, internationally comparable and up-to-date information on agriculture and the rural sector in Armenia. In order to keep the statistics up-to-date and further ensure the consistency of data, the clear understanding of inter census surveys and other related activities should be developed. Also, the NSS should be provided with the modern equipment ensuring the effective storage, back-up, protection and maintenance of Agricultural Census data.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
1.1. Organize workshops for central and regional NSS units to discuss the best practices for development of agricultural and rural statistics, establishing farm register, conducting surveys in between the Agricultural Census and other effective methods and techniques to be used by NSS in future years to keep the data up-to-date and ensure data consistency. The effective methods for data verification will also be discussed.	May-August, 2017	UNDP Armenia NSS	Ongoing	
1.2. Procure electronic data storages for NSS to ensure proper storing, back-up, protection and maintenance of Agricultural Census data.	May-August, 2017	UNDP Armenia NSS	Ongoing	

Evaluation Recommendation 2: The future support should be focused on further improving the use of the Census data.

Management Response: This is a valid recommendation. There is a significant demand by government, NGOs, media, academia for the agricultural census data

and it is already being used by a variety of end-users. But since the Agricultural Census has been implemented just recently, there is still the need to further improve the use of data by experts, non-expert users and general public. To ensure the improved and more user-friendly access to the agricultural census data, the online interactive statistical map should be developed to search the Census data by category, regions, communities. Also, to make the data more user-friendly and visual for wider audience, the leaflets on various topics of Census findings should be developed and disseminated to the large user community. The details on these and other possible actions are presented in Key Actions section below.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
2.1. Develop online interactive statistical map allowing to search the Census data by category, regions and communities to ensure the improved and more user-friendly access to the agricultural census data. This will contribute to the increased usage of Census data by experts, non-expert users and general public as well as to advance the use of data for policy making purposes.	May-August, 2017	UNDP Armenia NSS	Ongoing	
2.2. Develop, translate, publish and disseminate leaflets on various topics of Census findings to the large user community. Where possible the gender segregated data will be used. The leaflets will help to make the data more user-friendly and visual for wider audience and will enhance the use of the census data for policy making purposes. The leaflets will be distributed during several thematic meetings to be held with the representatives of Ministries, educational institutions, students and researchers, as well as NGO representatives of agriculture and rural development sectors.	May-August, 2017	UNDP Armenia NSS	Ongoing	
2.3. Discuss with the NSS management the NSS website design improvements. The improved website will allow to enhance the use of statistical data, including the agricultural and rural data.	May-July, 2017	UNDP Armenia NSS	Ongoing	
2.4. Organize workshops for central and regional NSS units to discuss the best practices of effective use of Census data.	May-August, 2017	UNDP Armenia NSS	Ongoing	

Evaluation Recommendation 3: The further interventions should be focused on census cycle of activity.

Management Response: This is a valid recommendation and in line with the NSS priorities to further enhance the rural and agricultural statistics in Armenia. The agricultural census is not viewed by NSS as a one-time event, instead the census is viewed as part of a cycle of activity. In order to keep the agricultural statistics up-to-date, accurate and relevant as well as to put the emphasis on census cycle of activity, the clear understanding of post census surveys, farm registry and other related activities should be developed. The cycle will be formulated into a timeline of activity to identify post-census surveys to keep data updated, and other activities so that the NSS and others are clear what needs to be done in future years.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
3.1. Organize workshops for central and regional NSS units to discuss the best practices for keeping the agricultural statistics up-to-date, accurate and relevant as well as for the emphasizing	May-August, 2017	UNDP Armenia NSS	Ongoing	

the census cycle of activity. The topics will include establishing farm register, conducting post census surveys and other effective methods and techniques. The cycle will also be formulated into a timeline of activity to identify post-census surveys and other activities so that the NSS and others are clear what needs to be done in future years.				

* The implementation status is tracked in the ERC.

Dmitry Mariyasin
UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Armenia