

UNDP Management Response

UNDP-GEF “Generate global environmental benefits through environmental education and raising awareness of stakeholders” Project (PIMS: 5309)

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Overall comments: The project Mid-term Review (MTR) reviewed the project implementation status and progress for the period of November 2015-November 2017. The Project overall progress was rated as “Satisfactory” and Project Results Framework mid-term targets were rated as “Satisfactory or Moderately Satisfactory”. The MTR also concluded that the scope of the Project was vast and somewhat ambitious, given the institutional complexity, and thus recommended extending the project for a 12-month period to ensure to fully complete the ongoing activities, consolidate and maximize the national and local impacts of the project outputs. Following the MTR the Project no-cost extension request has been submitted to and approved by UNDP-GEF Executive Coordinator. As recommended by MTR, the Project has also updated “...the project roadmap in order to use the remaining time in the most effective and efficient way.” For the remaining period of implementation (Y2018-Y2019), the Project will establish new and deepen the existing collaborations with externally funded projects, as well as will share its experience, lessons learnt and joint approach to capacity building and awareness raising on environmental education with relevant projects in the UNDP country office. The Project Management Response duly reflects all key recommendations and provides appropriate actions to be implemented by the Project team to ensure results achievement, successful completion and further sustainability of the Project.

MTR Recommendation or Issue 1.				
The chronology in the listing of the outcomes, outputs and activities in the logical framework should be respected as much as possible; for that reason the Mission feels that the delivery of training prior to the accomplishment of the institutional fundamentals (policies, legal frameworks, institutional adjustments) should be avoided as much as possible.				
Management Response: The recommendation is relevant and acceptable.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
The Project closely follows the outcomes, outputs and activities in the logical framework, which have been revised and “smartened” during the Inception phase in collaboration with the recruited international expert. The planned activities related to enhancing legal, policy, institutional and strategic frameworks are conducted in parallel with capacity building of educational institutions, specifically with the development of training modules to strengthen environmental education and raising awareness of stakeholder as natural resource management tools. Institutional and legal changes are continuous and time-consuming in nature; therefore, the delivery of training modules will be incorporated into already existing training programmes of decision makers. Further planned activities on legal and institutional enhancement will be ongoing.	By the end of 2019	Project team Implementing partners	This action is ongoing and has continuous nature	In process
MTR Recommendation or Issue 2.				
A number of externally funded related projects appear to be in the pipeline (World Bank, EC) or are ongoing (GIZ). These entities should be included in the PAC in order to generate synergy, cooperation and coordination.				
Management Response: The recommendation is relevant and acceptable.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
The Project has already ongoing cooperation with externally funded projects in the same field. Particularly, during the meeting with representatives of GIZ in Armenia the possibility of cooperation and better exchange of information flow was discussed, in order to avoid the duplications and increase the impact of the Project and the Integrated Biodiversity Management, South Caucasus (IBiS) project implemented by GIZ.	By the end of 2019	Project team	This action is ongoing and has continuous nature	In process

For 2018-2019 the Project will establish/strengthen cooperation with UNICEF, particularly in activities related to training of teachers and development of educational materials for the youth. In May UNICEF and GIZ will be invited for a membership in Advisory Committee of the Project. For the remaining period of implementation, the Project will deepen the existing collaborations with externally funded projects, as well as will seek to establish new ones.				
MTR Recommendation or Issue 3.				
A clear and well-defined list of all training packages that are planned under education, training and awareness raising activities under outcomes #2 and #3 should be prepared. Training packages should be clearly specified (provider, target group, curriculum etc..)				
Management Response: The recommendation is relevant and acceptable.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
The development of training modules is conducted based on the results of comprehensive Training Need Assessment, including identified needs and gaps among governmental and self-governing bodies. The materials were also utilizing cutting-edge research in Behavioral Science to foster environmentally friendly. To ensure proper quality control mechanisms for developed training modules/materials, the draft package was duly presented to the Project Advisor Committee for discussion and feedback. The training modules will be accompanied by methodological manual with guidelines for adapting and adjustments of modules and teaching approaches for different target groups. Training materials for mass media and Community-based organizations will be developed by Project grantees and the vendors aimed at raising public awareness on environmental issues. All the finalized training packages and materials will be presented by and discussed with project stakeholders and Advisory Committee for final validation/endorsement.	By the end of 2018	Project team		In process
MTR Recommendation or Issue 4.				
The Project should prepare, soonest, a precise, detailed and prioritized list of all issues and tasks (analytical, strategic, legal, institutional etc.) that remain on the table, for each of the three components of the Project. A clear, precise and well defined practical roadmap should be prepared in order to use the remaining time of the Project in the most effective and efficient way.				

<p>Such roadmap should be derived at (preferably) in a participative manner by organizing e.g. a workshop involving all stakeholders in this crucial planning process. The workshop should be guided and moderated by an institutionally neutral facilitator. Alternatively, a roadmap proposal could be prepared, submitted to the participants and endorsed at the meeting. The Mission favours the first proposal which has the benefit of better participation, synergy and institutions' ownership. The above (endorsed) roadmap should clearly define "who does what?" during the remaining time of the Project.</p>				
<p>Management Response: The recommendation is partially relevant and partially acceptable.</p>				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
The Project roadmap was developed during the inception phase considering feedback and recommendations multi-stakeholder kick-off workshop attended by more than 50 stakeholders representing key ministries, governmental and educational institutions, international and non-governmental organizations. The roles and responsibilities of stakeholders reflected in Inception Report are under the constant attention of the Project team and are adjusted to ongoing institutional changes in relative governmental and educational entities. The latest updated roadmap, also reflecting the project extension period, will be presented for the Project Board's approval in July 2018.	By Q2 of 2018	Project team		Ongoing
<p>MTR Recommendation or Issue 5.</p>				
<p>If the implementation or coordination of the training programs are to be handled by a single (main) government agency, it may be advisable to move the PMU to that agency. It will enhance ownership, effectiveness, efficiency and not the least: sustainability. In doing so, UNDP could gradually phase out its role while the GoA increases its stake and responsibility in the operation.</p>				
<p>Management Response: The recommendation is partially relevant and not acceptable.</p>				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Following donor requirement, prior to project launch the implementing partner had been officially requested to allocate office space for hosting the project team. However, the latter had communicated the unavailability of resources to host the Project. Thus, the Project was located within the UN House premises. However, the project activities are closely coordinated with the Ministry of Nature Protection and Ministry of Education to ensure national ownership, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability through that well-established partnership.	By the end of 2016	UNDP CO Project team		Completed

Also, the Project Management is executed through Project Management Board comprised of key governmental partners (RoA Ministry of Nature Protection, RoA Ministry of Science and Education), ensuring proper coordination and decentralized project management.				
MTR Recommendation or Issue 6.				
Under the current situation it is not likely that the Project will achieve its objectives. A no cost 6 to 12 months' project extension appears unavoidable, while attempting to increase effectiveness and efficiency.				
Management Response: The recommendation is relevant and acceptable.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Following the recommendation of MTR, as well as Project Board (December 2017) recommendation, the Project requested for no-cost extension for the duration of 12 months (till 03.11.2019). The request was approved by UNDP-GEF Executive Coordinator; and the Project has updated work-plan and budget, respectively.	By Q1, 2018	Project team		Completed