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| **UNDP Management Response to the Recommendations of Mid-Term Evaluation Report on** |
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| **UNDP-GEF “Elimination of obsolete pesticide stockpiles and addressing POPs contaminated sites within a sound chemicals management framework” full sized project - PIMS: 4905** |
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| **Mid-Term Evaluation date:**  | **February 2018 - June 2018** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **General comments:** The project Mid-term Review (MTR) mission conducted from February to June 2018, reviewed and evaluated the project implementation status and progress for the period of June 2015 to February 2018. The overall project progress was rated as: "Based on this review of the M&E function of the project, it is rated as **moderately satisfactory**. There are too many indicators to monitor the progress made by the project producing long progress reports; the PIR-2017 contains 34 pages to report on progress made toward the objective and outcomes. These reports are not reader-friendly and do not present clearly and concisely the progress made to “eliminate obsolete pesticide stockpiles and addressing contaminated sites within a sound chemicals management strategy”. The project has lost one year due to failed international procurement. The full completion of the project by May 2019 should be ruled-out; it will take more time to complete the project and a time extension is recommended. Adaptive management was used regularly to adapt to changes that occurred almost regularly since the outset of the project. Overall, the adaptive management was used to keep project expenditures as low as possible to keep the budget in line with the slow progress, in order to keep the GEF grant resources available for when the large clean-up phase will go ahead. It is noted that stakeholders are engaged in the project despite the slow progress made so far.  |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 1.** |
| It is recommended to extend the project to November 2020.  |
| **Management response:** Given the waste excavation and packaging is a seasonal work, it is anticipated that the 1,052 tones obsolete pesticides waste disposal, 4,100 tones high contaminated soil treatment and site restoration works will not be completed by the end of 2020. The project will need a closure period by the end of November 2021.  |
| **Key Action(s):** Prepare and submit justifications for project extension with an end date 26 November 2021. | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 20.11.2018 | Project team/ RTA unit | Comments  | Status - In process  |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 2.** |
| It is recommended to organize a high-level meeting in order to provide a forum for high level discussions on how to address/resolve the current issues. |
| **Management response:** For the high-level coordination and effective solutions the PM's office is recommendable to be involved in discussions and addressing important issues. |
| **Key Action(s):**Request a formal meeting at the PM's office, inform the new nominated officials on the project specifics and issues, request close coordination for timely decision making. | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 30.08.2018 | Project team | Comments  | Status - Done |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 3.** |
| It is recommended to constitute an “Executive” Committee as a sub-set of the PMB with quarterly meetings. |
| **Management response:** By its governance arrangement the project is executed by the three government bodies - the Prime Minister's Office of Armenia, Ministry of Nature Protection and Ministry of Emergency Situations. To follow-up the recommendation, the "Executive" group of the Project Management Board will be formalized through the PMB next meeting.  |
| **Key Action(s):**In the next PMB meeting agenda include the suggestion of specifying the "Executive" group and achieve this decision recorded in the PMB meeting protocol.  | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 31.01.2019 | Project team, PMB meeting | Comments  | Status - In process  |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 4.** |
| It is recommended to strengthen the link between the project through the PMB and the Inter-Agency Committee on the Implementation of the SC. |
| **Management response:** The recommendation will be discussed with the Stockholm Convention Inter-Agency Committee focal point and will accept any suggestion for strengthening the link between the project/PMB and the SCIAC. **Comment:** The nominated members of the Inter-Agency Committee from the MES, MoFA, MoH, NGO, MoA are parallel involved in the PMB or project advisory committee/PAC, in addition in the PAC there are the same members from the Ministry of Defense, Police, MNP, Yerevan Municipality in both structures. The PMB members have higher decision maker status, that the SCIAC members. The project regularly delivers presentation at the SCIAC meetings and provides requested written reports. |
| **Key Action(s):**  Communicate and discuss the recommendation with the SCIAC focal point and agree what additional reporting or communicating mechanism-channel can be applied to improve the coordination. **Note:** The recommendation is communicated, additional channel is not suggested by the focal point, however the project will behave proactive and will provide updates. | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 01.12.2018 | Project team /impl. partner | Comments  | Status - Ongoing |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 5.** |
| It is recommended to update the DOA to be in line with the current status of the project and its options to move ahead. |
| **Management response:** The DOA will be updated and Regional Technical Advisor will be contacted for guidance/technical support. |
| **Key Action(s):** Contact Regional Technical Advisor to process the DOA revision. The RTA didn't recommend to re-issue the DOA. The required changes shall be discussed at and approved by the Project Management Board Meeting and captured by PMB meeting minutes. | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 31.12.2018 | Project team/PMB meeting | Comments  | Status - In process  |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 6.** |
| It is recommended to locate the project office within a related government department.  |
| **Management response**: The recommendation is not fully accepted. The project has been located separately to enhance its neutral operations (given the project has three executive governmental bodies). |
| **Key Action(s):**To revisit the recommendation if at any further stage the project's management scheme is changed.  | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 31.12.2019 | Project team /impl. partner | Comments  | Status - Suspended  |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 7.** |
| It is recommended to streamline the number of performance indicators and targets.  |
| **Management response:** Project Results Framework (PRF) will be updated.  |
| **Key Action(s):** Review and update the PRF. | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 01.12.2018 | Project team /impl. partner | Comments  | Status - Completed  |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 8.** |
| It is recommended to increase the communication with Stakeholders using information accumulated by the project in order to develop a more unified vision on what the project should do. |
| **Management response:** The recommendation to use quarterly information sharing with the PMB is acceptable.  |
| **Key Action(s):** Preparation and sharing of quarterly information updates with the PMB. | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 01.12.2018 | Project team  | Comments  | Status - Ongoing |
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| **MTR Recommendation on Issue 9.** |
| It is recommended to review and consolidate the risks of this project.  |
| **Management response:** The risks are identified based on PD and the SESP framework, and those relevant for this project are reflected.  |
| **Key Action(s):**Conduct periodic revision of risks. | **Time Frame** | **Responsible Unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| 01.12.2018 | Project team  | Comments  | Status - Ongoing |