**FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**ON THE “Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities” PROJECT (ISRDBRC)**

Yerevan, Armenia

October, 2020

**PROJECT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION DETAILS**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Information** | | |
| **Project Title** | Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities | |
| **Atlas ID** | 00081907-00091029 | |
| **Corporate Outcome and Output** | UNDAF OUTCOME 1. Inclusive and sustainable growth is promoted by reducing disparities and expanding economic and social opportunities for vulnerable groups.  OUTCOME 1.2. Vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia.  OUTPUT 1.2.1. National and local capacity-building to develop and implement innovative and diversified income-generating policies and practices aimed at the most vulnerable groups strengthened. | |
| **Country** | Republic of Armenia | |
| **Region** | Tavush marz | |
| **Date Project Document Signed** | 18 of March, 2015 | |
| **Project Dates** | **Start** | **Planned end** |
| March 2015 | March 2020 |
| **Project Budget** | USD 5,024,988.70 | |
| **Funding Source** | Government of Russian Federation | |
| **Implementing Partner:** | Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia | |
| **Responsible Party** | United Nations Development Programme | |

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| **Evaluation Information** | | |
| **Evaluation Type** | Country Programme | |
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The author is also grateful for the time and participation of the respondents and key informants: governmental and local-community partners, partners in development and implementation, as well as other key stakeholders and beneficiaries in target communities of Armenia who shared their experiences and opinions in this learning process.

**ii. Affirmation**

Except the cases when appropriate authors and publications are acknowledged and referred to, the report enclosed herein consists of the author’s own work undertaken in compliance with Project materials and requirements set in the Terms of References of the final evaluation. The views and conclusions expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Project donor, Project implementers, and the Project’s responsible party.

Data collected throughout the evaluation process remains the property of the stakeholders described in this document. Information and data are used with their consent.

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*October 2020*

**List of abbreviations**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CBO** | Community-Based Organization |
| **CDP** | Community Development Plan |
| **CPD** | UNDP Armenia Country Programme Document 2016-2020 |
| **ISRDBRC** | Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities |
| **LSG** | Local Self-Government Body |
| **MTAI** | Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia |
| **NGO** | Non-Governmental Organization |
| **RA** | Republic of Armenia |
| **RRF** | Results and Resources Framework |
| **ToR** | Terms of Reference |
| **UNEG** | United Nations Evaluation Group |
| **UNDP** | United Nations Development Programme |

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The “Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities” (ISRDBRC) Project (hereinafter: the Project) is financed by the Government of the Russian Federation and was implemented in bordering communities of Tavush Region of the RA over five years. The overall goal of the Project is to ensure balanced development of the RA regions through an integrated socio-economic approach, as well as raising the quality of life and income level of the local population in bordering areas of Tavush region.

The Project has three main **components**:

1. *Development planning.* Will include elaboration of participatory integrated community development plans for 45 communities with consideration of socio-economic and environmental, including disaster risk.
2. *Community sustainability activities – Agriculture and agro-processing.* Will include: sector-specific capacity building, establishment of agricultural machinery pools, construction of small greenhouses, establishment of small-scale contemporary agro-processing units, establishment/improvement of orchards/vineyards, and establishment of collection centers.
3. *Community sustainability activities – Energy Efficiency/sustainable water management/infrastructure rehabilitation.* Will include: rehabilitation of community infrastructures with focus on energy efficiency, introduction of water saving technologies, ensuring access to safe drinking water.

The Project targeted the 45 bordering communities of Tavush region, with an overall population of 62,000. The beneficiaries of these communities got direct or indirect benefits from the project in the form of: access to quality infrastructures, collection center of agricultural products and parks of agricultural machinery, as well as employment in agricultural and agro-processing sectors.

The final evaluation of the Project presented in this document was conducted with the purpose to inform UNDP Armenia, other Partners, and stakeholders on the outcomes of this Project as well as different cooperation processes during its implementation. The methodology used in this evaluation was discussed and agreed with UNDP Armenia based on the original ToR. Having in mind the weaknesses of available quantitative data it was agreed to apply an integrated qualitative-quantitative methodology. Main findings and conclusions of the Final Evaluation, presented in the report, are:

**Relevance.** The strong involvement of MTAI and other national partners in programming and project design ensured full alignment of targeted Project's outcomes and impact with a national development framework, as well as project logic and coherence on the level of impact and outcomes. Lack of local inputs in the programming stage was successfully solved with adjustments to local needs during the inception stage by the Project team, as well as by efficient locally-based operational planning. It ensured the Project’s logic and coherence on the results level. Though the Project was designed in 2015, its relevance stands the test of time.

**Effectiveness.** The Project made a success in implementing all major and planned sub-projects covering several areas (socio-economic and environmental) of importance for bordering communities and the region.

Under component 1 the planning process yielded 45 Community Development Plans (hereinafter: CDP) which can serve as a basis for the development of the mandatory five-year CDPs prepared by the LSGs.

Under component 2 the Project established and implemented the following:

* 126 energy efficient greenhouses (135m2) were installed in a total of 33 communities;
* 40 small agro-processing units were provided to individual farmers (wine production equipment, fruit dryers, small sewing businesses, bread production equipment) in 26 communities;
* 42 ha of new fruit orchards were planted in a total of 7 communities;
* 3 agricultural machinery pools were established in a total of 3 community clusters;
* 3 agricultural collection centers were established in 1 community cluster and 2 communities;
* 1 seedling greenhouse was installed in 1 community;
* 1 legume production cooperative was established in 1 community;
* 1 horticulture development center and gardening machinery pool were established in 1 community;
* 6 trainings on fruit and herb drying, grape processing/wine making, greenhouse management, horticulture/gardening, bakery and wheat processing, and innovative agriculture involving more than 90 beneficiaries in intensive learning exercise delivered.

Under component 3 the Project established and implemented the following:

* Rehabilitation of community infrastructures using innovative technologies:
  + Partial renovation and raising the energy efficiency of community’s Culture House;
  + 10 school canteens renovating to a total of 10 communities;
  + 31 km street energy lighting system to a total of 9 communities;
* 51 ha of drip irrigation systems were constructed in a total of 7 communities;
* 3 km or irrigation water main pipeline was renovated in 1 community whit irrigation system covering 54 ha of land;
* 1 drinking water system was renovated in 1 community;
* 1 biomass briquetting production was established in Ijevan area;
* 1 community guest house was established in cooperation with the UNDP Rural Tourism Development Program in 1 community;
* 3245 LED lamps were installed for residential buildings for 3 communities as part of national “Bright Border” Initiative.

Listed achievements, analyzed on the basis of targets, clearly demonstrate that the Project exceeded the targets at the level of outcomes. This is due to the overachievements on the level of planned outputs.

**Efficiency.** Multifaceted intervention structure required a complex implementing structure. Operational level and Project team's functionality were key elements of the overall intervention efficiency. During the implementation, the Project succeeded to develop a model for the implementation of the complex multi-agency/multi-beneficiary intervention. In general, the Project funds and activities have been delivered by participating beneficiaries in a timely manner. The Project succeeded to deliver not only initially planned, but also some additional results, proving overall Project efficiency. Overachievement of Project targeted results is to a large degree based on a well-structured budget and efficient of the Project team's activities implementation structure.

**Sustainability.** The main sustainability pillar of Project results is the ownership of beneficiaries over the process and achievements, which is strongly founded and built throughout the entire intervention cycle. Having in mind that the Project provided effective development concept for bordering communities, efficient model for implementation, and result-based action models for beneficiaries, the optimal way to continue on-going effort would be to continue developing communities in various regions based on this experience.

**Impact.** At the regional and community level in each area of Tavush region where the Project implemented sub-projects, a series of positive impacts have been identified. The Project implemented positive policy and institutional measures (supported by the local community) towards improving agricultural machinery pools, legume production cooperative, agricultural collection centers, and agro-foundations. Project’s investment in building the evidence base on socio-economic indicators and the current status of vulnerable groups in the region has become a valuable resource for national partners and other stakeholders to develop interventions and measures to improve the status of vulnerable groups in bordering communities. Furthermore, the Project created the missing link between the state and local administrations, strengthened capacities of national and local partners, and developed an effective and sustainable framework for the protection of direct and indirect beneficiaries.

**Specific Cross Cutting Synergies and Results with UNDP Other Projects.** Intended Outcome of the Project *(Vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia)* is stated in the UNDAF/Country [or Global/Regional] Programme Results and Resource Framework. Also together with UNDP’s WiLD-2 project, the Project conducted a one-day workshop for women entrepreneurs of Tavush region and announced a call for project ideas to support the best project ideas. The winning proposals received various equipment to start their small businesses in their villages, thus, contributing to women’s financial independence and stability.

**Major Limitations.** During the course of the evaluation, the evaluator encountered some moderate limitations that were not considered to have significantly affected the results of the exercise. These include the following:

# *Worsening of the situation on Armenia-Azerbaijan border*

The political situation and the ceasefire violations created difficulties, security restrictions for operating field visits in certain communities, especially, in the Berd area. To offset these gaps or limitations, the evaluator organized field visits in the selected communities of the Berd area at the end of the data collection phase in a more peaceful and stable environment.

# *COVID-19 Effects*

# Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation obliges to keep a distance during face to face communication. When it comes to priorities, the health of the population should indisputably come first. In cases where it was not possible to carry out fieldwork outdoors, have been used online evaluation modality to avoid any risks of COVID-19 for interviewer and interviewees, taking into account live-streamed interventions: zoom meetings, telephone calls, and Skype conferences.

# *Gender Equality*

Gender equality related norms and factors in the communities related to the participation of women did not serve as limitations in this evaluation. The evaluation process was an opportunity for community members, especially those living in rural and more traditional setting, to analyze their lives and the Project impact from the perspective of gender equality.

**Lessons Learned.** To sum up, it can be safely concluded that the Project has been very successful, not only with regard to pioneering approaches to deal with the socio-economic problems and improve the environmental condition for local vulnerable communities in the bordering Tavush region but also in terms of results and possible replication and with regard to scaling up. The preceding list presents lessons learned that can be drawn up based on the information available.

LESSON 1.While co-financing can sometimes be an obstacle to undertake a venture through small-scale enterprises for the local farmers, still it reinforces the sense of ownership and is an absolute must to ensure the longevity of the project’s impact. So, the co-funding requirement is still a strong indicator and tool to increase the project ownership and it helps to identify the main beneficiary for the most successful project implementation.

LESSON 2.Thanks to the wide collaboration with other international and local organizations, the communities, and beneficiaries manage to find the required co-financing funds. For the same reason, a strong institutional basis supported by the local community should be established for a medium, community-oriented joint production.

LESSON 3.All the sub-projects whether in partnership with the local municipality or the community should be endorsed by a representative and independent committee or/and the community council, to ensure that the initiative is taken by the consent of the community.

LESSON 4.There should be a stronger link between the community development plans and the initiatives and local development strategies offered by the Government to fine-tune the efforts, ensure synergy and mutual support.

**Main Conclusions and Recommendations.** Project concept is proven as relevant and efficiently implemented. The applied implementation model, although complex, but succeeded to derive strong synergy of involved donors and agencies, creating a functional platform for utilizing small-scale capacities. Good functional cooperation with national partners, development partners, and other stockholders on all levels has been established. Therefore, further support in order to replicate and up-scale achieved results and to strengthen their sustainability by using developed Project model and mechanism should be recognized as justified and recommendable.

Summarizing the results of the evaluation according to the major components it is important to mention the following revelations and **conclusions**:

CONCLUSION 1.ISRDBRC is a highly relevant Project, successfully aligned with country and region development framework, strategies, as well as with MTAI targets. Global Partners’ relations (MTAI and UNDP) and expectations have been clearly detailed in the cooperation agreement and clearly understood from the Projects’ onset, by defining working relationships, inputs by each partner, and providing for joint visibility.

CONCLUSION 2.Three componential structure of the Project successfully demonstrated implementation of RRF actions on a complex multi-sector intervention. The Project initiatives directed towards adding value to the local products and creating value chains generate significant economic returns and spill-over for the communities. They also directed towards strong institutional basis for agricultural machinery pools, legume production cooperative, agricultural collection centers and community development funds.

CONCLUSION 3.The strengths of the Project had been during the implementation by strong participation at community levels and efficient operational planning and flexible and strong follow up of field implementation. The Project promoted an integrated vision of local development, following an area- and outcome-based development approach. The effects of the intervention at both outcomes and impact levels are overachieved: most of the outcome indicators are significantly higher than targeted values. Overall results of the Project are demonstrating a high level of sustainability expectancy. The basis for results’ sustainability is developed primarily through strong local participation and ownership, including local capacity building approach.

CONCLUSION 4.Project provided knowledge and services for the benefit of vulnerable groups. Specific, innovative services have been created in agriculture and agro-processing for the rural population. The incorporation of gender issues was a positive key aspect of the region to local activities, and of the knowledge management products. Gender mainstreaming gave visibility of the socio-economic issues upon women and worked towards equitable inclusion and adaptation issues.

CONCLUSION 5.The strongest point of the managerial structure was the Project team, which demonstrated a high level of flexibility and ability to react promptly to the identified needs of direct and indirect beneficiaries. M&E system of intervention was initial point of project implementation, and it was revised and substantially improved during the implementation, providing necessary inputs for project management and final evaluation. Project management and vulnerability assessment tools, instruments, knowledge products, and methodologies have been used for the sub-projects, were successful as far they helped in mobilizing local groups and addressed local needs. Time management was justified and all funds were used in line with Project goals and contributed to the overall Project’s delivery and results. Budget structure and efficient financial implementation construed the Project's actual results.

CONCLUSION 6.Media and CSO sectors have been involved in the Project phase providing visibility. Better communication between local, regional, and national authorities has been established. ISRDBRC succeeded to generate a successful structural model/platform for an implementation of a complex multi-agency/multi-beneficiary intervention and for creating synergy with other donor interventions in the region.

CONCLUSION 7.The security situation remains one of the main priorities and concerns in the region.

Based on the results of the evaluation we can bring forward the following **recommendations**:

RECOMMENDATION 1.The Project represents a successful model-platform for complex multi-agencies/multi-beneficiary intervention and its application should be further promoted. The Project ought to support and scale-up models of sustainable production and processing in the communities resulting in income raise for the households in the rural areas. All the models should be to the biggest extent inclusive targeting women, the youth, and other vulnerable groups and should ensure decent jobs and comprehensive support from the stage of consulting to capacity building and provision of production means. The Project’s innovative management model of community-based organizations should be replicated as a prerequisite to the sustainability of the Project interventions. Given the Project's positive results, a continuation would be highly recommended, not only attempting to replicate and upscale the activities already carried out, but also moving beyond expanding work in other regions and in other communities.

RECOMMENDATION 2.The Project should be implemented in its well-developed visibility strategy making sure that the success stories were on spot locally and regionally and the Project-funded assets and construction had better be easily identifiable for the locals and the donors.

RECOMMENDATION 3.Collaboration with international organizations and local agencies, also paying attention to the engagement of the private sector, would rather continue to be nurtured and strengthened.

RECOMMENDATION 4.In order to reinforce initial benefits and build upon them, future directions ought to consider reinforcing the positive aspects demonstrated by this Project in respect to the community-based approaches discussed in this document and build upon what has been field-tested and proven as demonstrated by the achievement of the Project and its local-level sub-projects.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

Overall goal of the Project is to promote inclusive and sustainable growth by reducing disparities and expanding economic and social opportunities for vulnerable groups.

Overall objective of the Project is to ensure balanced development of RA regions through an integrated socio-economic approach, as well as raising the quality of life and income level of the local population in bordering areas of Tavush region.

The international and UNDP experience in implementing projects in sustainable rural development area highlights the necessity of integrated approach requiring the parallel realization of the following elements:

* Promoting investment in income generation (environmental sustainable);
* Socio-economic infrastructure rehabilitation;
* Strengthening social capital (stimulating Public Private Partnership);
* Strengthening participatory mechanisms (strengthening for LSGs for strategic planning, implementation and monitoring, introduction of participatory planning mechanisms);
* Promoting environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources, including energy efficiency;
* Facilitate the development of the “resilient community” concept including assessment and applications on major resilience principles;
* Application of innovative methodologies and approaches.

Disregarding or omitting any of the above mentioned directions of rural development will weaken the impact of other activities, and consequently will reduce the long-term sustainability of the Project.

The theory of change of the Project hinges on the principles of integrated and participatory community led development. Through an array of participatory tools and methodologies the Project thoroughly analyzed the real situation in the communities considering the economic, social, cultural, environmental dimensions and engaging the community and the local self-government bodies in needs assessment and solution co-design processes. This enables to get a clear picture of the vulnerabilities and threats on the one side and the opportunities and potential on the other side as experienced by the local population. This detailed map of problems and the available resources allows the Project to comprehensively address the needs of the communities by designing need-driven, context-specific interventions in the sphere of income-generation and infrastructure rehabilitation building strong partnerships with the local communities, linking the local governments to interested parties, or assisting them to reach out to available funds. As a result of highly inclusive approach a strong ownership is built among the beneficiary communities. This approach has enabled the economic empowerment of local beneficiaries through engagement in primary and secondary sustainable agricultural production and improved their livelihoods through facilitating access to rehabilitated infrastructure.

**3. Evaluation ObjectiveS AND SCOPE**

***3.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation***

The **purpose** of the independent external evaluation (hereinafter: Evaluation) is to measure results and (if available at this stage already) the impact of the Project.

The **principal** **objectives** of the evaluation are:

1. to focus on evaluating and learning from the Project results and lessons throughout the Project implementation;
2. to assess how the Project has contributed towards its expected outcome of enabling the economic empowerment of locals through engagement in primary and secondary sustainable agricultural production and improved their livelihoods through facilitating access to rehabilitated infrastructure through participatory community development planning;
3. to assess how the Project achieved its goal of participatory community planning, income generation through agriproduction and processing, and rehabilitated community infrastructures in 45 borderline communities of Tavush region and evaluate the replicability of the interventions.

***3.2 Scope of the Evaluation***

The evaluation placed the emphasis on the assessment of the performance of Project in achieving its intended outputs and results (contribution or attribution to outcomes) as per the associated CPD theories of change. The evaluation also reviewed and provided the project’s impact on individuals and households in a disaggregated way.

The **specific objectives** of the evaluation were:

1. to assess project’s achieved outputs vis-à-vis the Results and Resources Framework;
2. to assess the project’s attribution and contribution to achieved outcomes, indicating also strengths, weaknesses and unexpected results (by-products);
3. Indicate Project’s contribution/attribution to the achievement of Country Programme Document outputs and outcomes;
4. to determine the overall efficiency in the utilization of resources in achieving results;
5. to assess the appropriateness of the design of the project and the implementation arrangements, including but not limited to the project modality, organizational structure, and coordination mechanisms set up to support the project;
6. to assess the extent to which the project has contributed to the creation of an enabling environment;
7. to assess the sustainability of results and provide recommendations for sustaining the benefits of the project and how to improve sustainability in future initiatives;
8. to assess the approach to capacity development and whether initiatives have contributed to sustainability;
9. to review the effectiveness of the gender mainstreaming strategy and partnership strategy;
10. to gain insights into the level of client satisfaction with the project. The clients include community and local government beneficiaries; national government partners and donors;
11. to identify best practices and lessons learned which can be replicated.

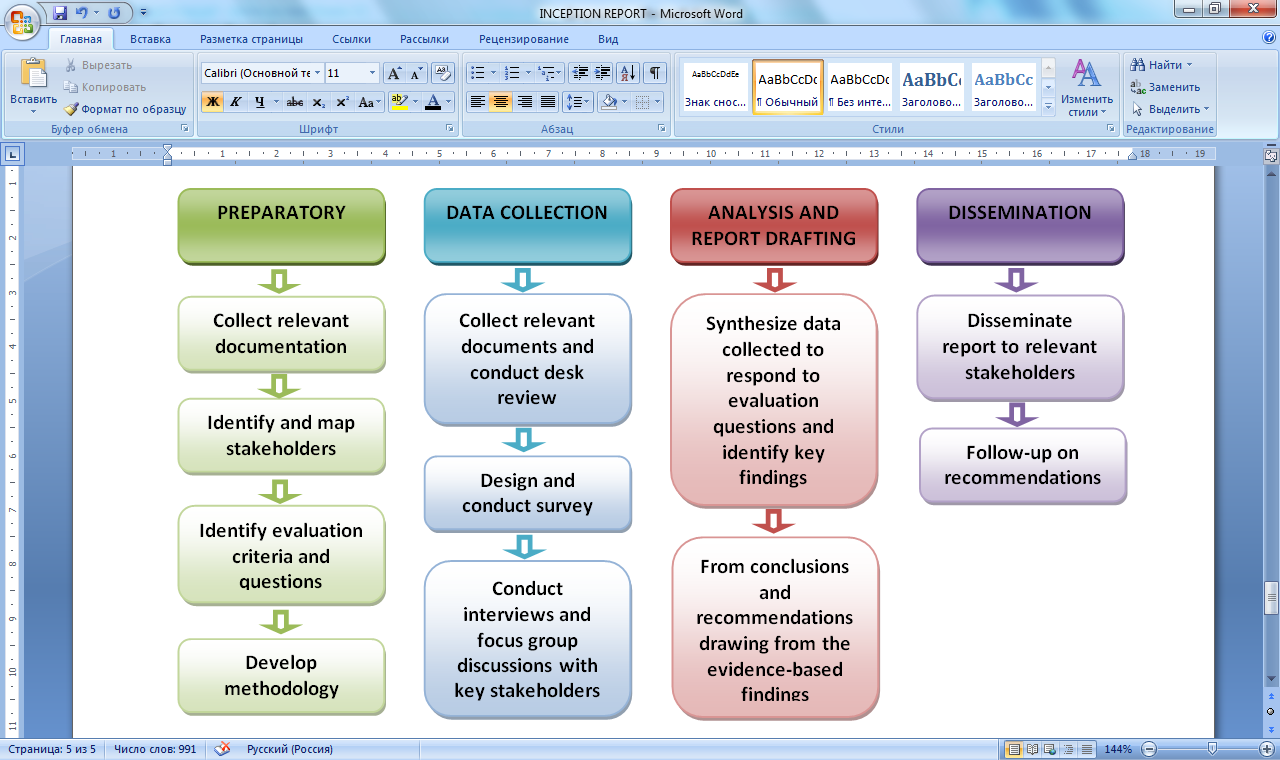
While the evaluation lent a close eye to the efforts made toward the achievement of these goals during the implementation period of 2015 -2020, it also was forward-looking so that learnings from the evaluation can feed into future implementation cycles.

The evaluation covered the implementation of the Project at the national, provincial, and local levels, with Tavush region as an in-depth case study for the evaluation given the cross-section of the Project activities.

***3.3 Overview of the Evaluation Process***

The evaluation carried out in several phases which are summarized in Figure 1. The indicative timeline and detailed information on each phase of the evaluation is presented in the Evaluation ToR (Annex 1).

**Figure 1: Evaluation Process.**

****

***3.4 Evaluation Criteria and Questions***

The evaluation has been informed by criteria developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) - relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. These criteria were the bases for the evaluation questions where, in some instances, a question may address one or more of the criteria in its intent. The evaluation questions were intended to give a more precise form to the evaluation criteria and to articulate the key areas of interest of stakeholders, thereby optimizing the focus and utility of the evaluation. The following evaluation criteria and questions have been developed presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Evaluation Criteria and Questions.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **EVALUATION CRITERIA** | **EVALUATION QUESTIONS** |
| **Relevance** | The extent to which intended outputs and outcomes of the project are consistent with national and local policies and priorities and the needs of intended beneficiaries. |
| **Effectiveness** | The extent to which the intended results have been achieved and whether opportunities created by the project were equally accessible for women and men. |
| **Efficiency** | How economically resources or inputs (e.g., funds, expertise and time) were converted to results? |
| **Sustainability** | The extent to which benefits of the project continue after external development assistance has withdrawn. This includes evaluating the extent to which relevant social, economic, political, institutional, and other conditions are present and, based on that assessment making projection about the national capacity to maintain, manage and ensure the development results in the future. |
| **Impact** | Changes in human development and people’s wellbeing that are brought about by development initiatives, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. |

***3.5 Outline of the Final Report***

At the synthesis phase, the draft of the final report has been developed and circulated to the UNDP Armenia and the Project team for checking any factual errors, missing evidences, discussing initial findings, etc. The draft/final report structure was in accordance with the principles of the UNDP evaluation report template and quality standards outlined in the UNEG “Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations”.

**4. EVALUATION approach and methods**

***4.1 EVALUATION approach***

The evaluation relied on a **qualitative approach** for data collection and analysis to extrapolate results at the outcome level. To strengthen the validity and reliability of the data collected, the evaluation employed the triangulation of methods as well as sources of information. Primarily, the evaluation referenced the CPD, Action Plan, and RRF. The following qualitative **methods** have been applied in the scope of the objectives and tasks put forward in the evaluation:

* Document Review;
* Key informants interviews;
* Focus group discussions;
* In-depth interviews.

The **multi-factor model of the analysis**, on one hand, enabled to reveal and evaluate the awareness, attitudes, and standpoints of the main stakeholders concerning already mentioned problems, thus exposing the present regularities and on the other hand, it explained the cause and effect relations based on the qualitative comments and examples.

The **data collection tools** have been developed based on the evaluation questions which are presented in the ToR.

***4.2 Sampling Frame***

# *Project Target Groups, Beneficiaries and Key Stakeholders*

The Project direct beneficiary pool includes:

1. Target communities;
2. Habitants of the target communities:
   1. beneficiary households;
   2. farmers;
   3. community-development funds;
   4. agroproduction units;
3. Local self-governing bodies;
4. National government partners;
5. Project staff.

Relevant stakeholders and indirect beneficiaries include:

* Family members;
* Representatives of the social environment such as relatives, neighbors;
* Experts from various fields;
* International Organisations;
* NGO networks;
* Educational Institutions;
* Media.

# *Document Review*

A document review was carried out to further refine evaluation questions and develop preliminary findings. The document review was also used to fine-tune the evaluation tools, to prepare for field work, and to triangulate data. The evaluation mainly focused on the following documents and sources:

* Country Programme Document;
* Monitoring and Annual Reports;
* Minutes of Project Steering Committee Meetings;
* Community Development Programmes;
* Statistics;
* Data from official and non-official sources and also the secondary type of data.

# *The Sample of the Key Informants Interviews*

# During the field visit, face-to-face interviews have been conducted to gather information from key informants using semi-structured interview guides based on the preliminary findings of the desk review. The key informant interviews have been conducted with the representatives of the following stakeholders:

* Government of RA (Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (ex RA MTAES) of Armenia);
* Local self-governing bodies from 3 areas of Tavush region;
* Community leaders;
* Development partners.

The evaluation included at least 15 key informants interviews during which the motives and attitudes of the interviewees to a certain situation, their causes and effects have been studied. Also have been viewed the field and present procedures from their professional perspective and interpreted the regularities that had been uncovered during the evaluation, so the interviews allowed for a deeper understanding of implementation thus far. The interview guide is presented in Annex 2 Interview Questions.

# *The Sample of the Focus Group Discussions*

Focus group discussions (hereinafter: FGD[[1]](#footnote-1)) have been also conducted during the week-long field visit. This method has been proved particularly useful to explore disparate views or discuss broader topics. It also provided the opportunities to add appropriate examples and reveal the cause and effect relations, to draw out and discuss latent topics and observe the interactions among participants. Similar to the interview questions, protocols for FGD have been developed to further explore issues and trends that emerged from the survey and address the areas of investigation.

In general, 1 FGD has been conducted with beneficiaries (7 participants). Participants included habitants of the target communities, representatives of beneficiary households, and trained people.

# *The Sample of In-Depth Interviews*

The number of in-depth interviewshave been at least 11 during which the interviewees expressed their ideas about the questions of the evaluation, provided us with the information referring to the applicable practices, regularities and facts and commented on their own standpoints regarding the solution of present problems as well. The in-depth interview guide is presented in Annex 4. In-depth interviews have been conducted with:

* Project staff (Project manager and the team);
* Representatives of Project direct beneficiaries:
  + farmers;
  + community-development funds;
  + agroproduction units;
  + LSGs.

The application of these methods have been intended to be transparent, inclusive, participatory, as well as take into consideration gender equality and human rights perspectives[[2]](#footnote-2). The interviews enabled us to reach the data saturation point and to ensure the trustworthiness and reliability of the collected qualitative data, as well as the validity of findings and conclusions. The analysis from the results informed key findings, conclusions and recommendations related to the Project implementation, to serve as a basis for decision-making and learning to further upscale result, effectiveness, and best practices in the future.

***4.3*** ***Ethical Considerations***

Oral consent from the respondents to participate in the survey have been obtained after explaining the aim and objectives of the evaluation, the procedures they need to pass along with the possible benefits and risks.

* Maintain anonymity by removing the respondents’ names, as well as other information that can help to identify people;
* Respect the privacy and confidentiality of respondents participating in the survey through considering of how much information the respondent wants to reveal or share, and with whom; privacy in the processes of information gathering/data collection and storage that allows the exchange of information to be confidential to those involved;
* Refrain from stereotypes/stereotyping. This applies not only to gender issues, but also to questions that involve sickness and health, social, political, and cultural opinions.

All the interviews have been done anonymously and the collected data have been generalized in the analysis. The responses have been analyzed at an aggregate level to identify emerging trends or issues relating to the particular areas of investigation of the evaluation. The list of respondents and persons consulted is presented in Annex 3.

***4.4 Major Limitations and Mitigation Strategies***

During the course of the evaluation, the evaluator encountered some moderate limitations that were not considered to have significantly affected the results of the exercise. These include the following:

# *Worsening of the situation on Armenia-Azerbaijan border*

The political situation and the ceasefire violations created difficulties, security restrictions for operating field visits in certain communities, especially, in the Berd area. To offset these gaps or limitations, the evaluator organized field visits in the selected communities of the Berd area at the end of the data collection phase in a more peaceful and stable environment.

# *COVID-19 Effects*

# Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation obliges to keep a distance during face to face communication. When it comes to priorities, the health of the population should indisputably come first. In cases where it was not possible to carry out fieldwork outdoors, have been used online evaluation modality to avoid any risks of COVID-19 for interviewer and interviewees, taking into account live-streamed interventions: zoom meetings, telephone calls, and Skype conferences.

# *Gender Equality*

Gender equality related norms and factors in the communities related to the participation of women did not serve as limitations in this evaluation. The evaluation process was an opportunity for community members, especially those living in rural and more traditional setting, to analyze their lives and the Project impact from the perspective of gender equality.

**5. KEY FINDINGS**

The findings presented in this chapter are based on key questions of the Analytical Framework, as requested in the ToR (Annex 1). This part of the report is structured in accordance with key issues and questions from the Analytical Framework.

The overall findings defined as the attainment of objectives, in this case, "to ensure balanced development of RA regions through an integrated socio-economic approach, as well as improving the quality of life and raising the income levels of the local population in bordering areas of Tavush region" have been highly satisfactory. In the sections below, the subjects of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, and visibility of the Project’s implementation, that make-up the overall results, are expanded upon.

***5.1 PROJECT RELEVANCE***

The relevance of the Project is assessed based on the extent to which the Project and its interventions and activities are suited to state, regional and local development policies and priorities and the needs of intended beneficiaries. Furthermore, relevance is also assessed by determining how the project relates to the main objectives of the RRF for the Project.

According to the partners in Project development and implementation, as well as other key stakeholders, the implementation process of the Project was highly important. The strong involvement and engagement of governmental partners in programming and Project design ensured full alignment of the Project's target objectives with the state, regional, community, and household levels of the development framework. Nevertheless, in terms of the output, the absence of regional partners (regional administration of Tavush region, local self-government bodies and institutions) from the Project preparation did not weaken the relevance of planned outputs. The most important qualitative input was provided through locally-based operational planning by the relevant executive party of the Project - UNDP Armenia Project team. As mentioned from many key informants' interviews:

*"...Project team and their attitude was the main mechanism to ensure high level of relevant results through Project implementation".* ***(Representative of the governmental institution (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview,)***

*“…due to the use of various tools and core methodologies, the Project team analyzed the real situation in the communities considering the socio-economic and environmental measurements in-depth”.* ***(Representative of the in international organization (female), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

*“…the relevance of the Project was especially emphasized in the bordering communities, where there was a lack of information, innovative actions, and the communities are more traditional and conservative. So, engaging the LSGs and community members in the assessment of needs and institutional capacities, and solution design processes of their communities were one of the keys to Project success”.* ***(Representative of the LSG (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

The Project is of high relevance to state policy. It is worth mentioning that in spite of the state policy and a range of measurements for the solution of various problems of the bordering communities the improvement of their socio-economic and environmental situations, this still remains as one of the most vulnerable and risky groups. This is a formal and resourced recognition that bordering communities are severely affected by the impacts of socio-economic and environmental problems, in addition to not being equipped with knowledge to cope and adapt and be resilient regarding these impacts. In outlining key elements of the Project goal, the Project relevance indicated its intention to improve the capacity of bordering communities to facilitate community-based development with three main components: development planning, agriculture and agro-processing, and community sustainability activities.

The underdeveloped socio-economic and environmental situation of the bordering communities is additionally weakened by negative demographic trends, especially, outmigration. These reasons made Project as an opportunity to impact the access to quality infrastructures and necessary agricultural machinery parks, expanding employment, the development of agro-processing sectors, as well as the quality of life of the rural population. Therefore, Project development initiatives addressed not only issues such as rehabilitation of socio-economic infrastructures and increasing income levels of bordering communities' population but also such essential aspects of community development as improving governance and recovering the social fabric of the communities.

Taking into account the above-mentioned it should be stressed that this is expressively aligned with regional and local priorities in the communities involved as well as with state priorities through the preparations of the Project strategies. The Project, therefore, soundly integrated the needs of the participating communities' local visions, community development commitments and strategies, as well as the needs of beneficiary’s local social, economic, environmental, and livelihoods needs.

The Project has also been relevant because it has provided lessons and knowledge for other funded projects, partners and institutions[[3]](#footnote-3), on the approach, design, and implementation of participatory community-based adaptation projects. The Project has been very valuable in the sense that it has nourished other new projects and programs and maintaining a strong potential to continue to do so in the future.

*“…the Project’s approach and the Project team's work were innovative by promoting and acknowledging local action. The community-based approach is, furthermore, has been explicitly and implicitly acknowledged by their role and involvement as partners in this program. Local actions reflect and support the needs, demands, perspectives, and commitments of local actors in adaptation projects and strategies have been essential and important working methods. This was not only done by recognizing the value of and needs of local action, but also by assuming a participatory approach, promoting the incorporation of local knowledge and the identification of priorities by local stakeholders”.* ***(Representative of the governmental institution (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

Regarding the selection criteria for the communities and beneficiaries selected, it can be stated that it was highly relevant and remained so throughout the implementation process. The Project required the provision of at least 20% of own contribution by beneficiaries for the sub-projects, which aimed at increasing ownership and sustainability of interventions.

*“…this Project is of high importance for Armenia and we need more projects of this kind especially in remote regions which are more conservative. We still are in a situation when representatives of various vulnerable groups are not visible in our society”.* ***(Representative of the LSG (female), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

Some interviewees of the evaluation connected the Project addressing the importance of “social changes that break stereotypes” in the society and it played a significant role in the sphere of employment in target communities as an innovative model that pays attention to the issue of female employment. Representatives of LSGs and other stakeholders found the Project relevant to their community needs for several reasons, such as countering gender bias and stereotypes, addressing lack of job opportunities, community conservatism and inclusion issues in general. In this sense participants think that there was a need for such a project, at least to raise the awareness of community members on gender equality and gender-related issues.

Overall, Project intervention, from the initial phase to its implementation, represents a good example of a successful implementation. The intervention was planned, programmed, and designed on the solid ground of national development platform and cooperation with governmental institutions, LSGs, local NGOs, CBOs, as well as the private sector. The Project succeeded in responding to national development priorities and their implementation at local level, and aligned country priorities of involved donors. As a result, the Project succeeded in building a potential good practice model for complex multi-donor, multi-agency, multi-beneficiary action. This model represents an example of how community-based actions and practices could be successfully applied at the singular intervention level.

***5.2 PROJECT effectiveness***

The effectiveness of the Project is defined as the extent to which the intended results have been achieved and opportunities created by the Project were equally accessible for women and men.

The Project made a success in implementing major sub-projects in the context of Project's three components, covering several areas of importance for the 45 communities. In spite of current pauses, the Project achieved its goals, and for majority of activities the result is better than expected. Overall final evaluation is showing that the Project overachieved targets on output level. Most important achieved results are presented in Table 2 (see details in Annex 5).

**Table 2. Project Results.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expected Outputs** | | **Output Indicators** | **Final Target** | | |
| ***Planned*** | ***Actual*** | ***Status*** |
| Output 1 | Development planning for 45 bordering communities conducted | 1.1 Number of Integrated community development plans | 45 | 45 | Completed |
| Output 2 | Community sustainability activities on agriculture and agro processing implemented | 2.1 Number of new CBO’s | 8 | 9 | Completed |
| 2.2 Number of new job opportunities | 564 | 644 | Completed |
| 2.3 Number of training courses | 6 | 6 | Completed |
| 2.4 Number of people trained | 60 | 193 | Completed |
| 2.5 Volumes of products flown through collection centers | 1000 | 30 | Completed |
| Output 3 | Community sustainability activities on energy efficiency/ sustainable water management/ infrastructure rehabilitation implemented | 3.1 Number of community infrastructure rehabilitated | 10 | 21 | Completed |
| 3.2 Water saving technologies introduced on 50 ha of land | 50 | 67.1 | Completed |
| 3.3 Number of population benefitting from access to safe drinking water and other infrastructures | 25000 | 18350 | Completed |

***Component 1: Development Planning***

During 5 years the Project covered 45 communities in Tavush region (Table 3).

**Table 3. Project communities in Tavush region.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Achajur | 10. Bagratashen | 19. Ditavan | 28. Mosesgegh | 37. Tavush (Tovuz) |
| 1. Acharkut | 11. Barekamavan | 20. Dovegh | 29. Navur | 38. Varagavan |
| 1. Aknaghbyur | 12. Berdavan | 21. Itsakar | 30. Nerkin Karmiraghbyur | 39. Vazashen |
| 1. Artsvaberd | 13. Berkaber | 22. Jujevan | 31. Nerkin Tsakhkavan | 40. Verin Karmiraghbyur |
| 1. Aygedzor | 14. Chinari | 23. Khashtarak | 32. Norashen | 41. Verin Tsakhkavan |
| 1. Aygehovit | 15. Chinchin | 24. Kirants | 33. Paravakar | 42. Voskepar |
| 1. Aygepar | 16. Choratan | 25. Koghb | 34. Ptghavan | 43. Voskevan |
| 1. Azatamut | 17. Debedavan | 26. Koti | 35. Sarigyugh | 44. Berd |
| 1. Baghanis | 18. Deghdzavan | 27. Lusahovit | 36. Sevkar | 45. Noyemberyan |

The planning process yielded 45 CDPs which aimed to serve as a basis for development of the mandatory five-year CDPs prepared by the LSGs. In close cooperation with LSGs and other community members at large (using integrated participatory planning methodology) the Project designed development plans and defined the priority projects which focus on efficient use of the human, social and physical capital assets of the community in an integrated and inclusive way. Besides the general introductory community meetings, more than 40 focus group discussions with local farmers, LNOB groups, women, and youth, were held in communities aimed at discussing the community needs in more details and through brainstorming possible solutions. The results of these discussions were summarized and included in the respective development plans of the communities. The final CDPs were discussed during a Community Council meeting in 32 communities and 3 settlements and were formally adopted by each Community Council with a special resolution.

**Component 2: Community Sustainability Activities – Agriculture and Agro-Processing**

The Project installed in Noyemberyan, Ijevan and Berd areas:

* **126 energy efficient greenhouses** (135m2) to a total of 33 communities[[4]](#footnote-4) with the purpose of increasing the income-level for beneficiary households through extending the seasonality of growing fresh vegetables. On the grounding training on cultivation, pest management and fertilizing techniques was provided to all the beneficiary households.
* **40 small agro-processing units** were provided to individual farmers:
  + **26 wine production** equipment to a total in 10 communities[[5]](#footnote-5). This equipment together with support with labeling and bottling helped the farmers to improve the quality of their homemade wine and enter into the market with a unified brand “Tavush Wine”. The farmers produced limited number of bottled wine every year, with having a target of 100 bottles each for the first production year.
  + **7 fruit dryers** in 5 communities[[6]](#footnote-6). This equipment helped to diversify the production cycle and helped the farmers to not only sell fresh fruit during the season, but also to enter the market with dried fruit products.
  + **6 small sewing businesses** in 4 communities[[7]](#footnote-7). In order to help women entrepreneurship in the region, the Project has identified young women who have started a small sewing business using their household sewing machine.
  + **1 bread production** equipment, including specialized transport for bread products in Sarigyugh community.
* **42** **ha of new fruit orchards** planted in 7 communities[[8]](#footnote-8). The preference was given to intensive and semi-intensive sorts of seedlings to ensure faster investment turnover. The species of orchards were selected according to the local soil and climate peculiarities as well as the economic benefits. Thus, walnuts, hazelnuts, cornelian cherries, fig, persimmon trees were planted.
* **3 agricultural machinery pools** in 3 community clusters[[9]](#footnote-9). Each cluster received one combine harvester (Niva EFFECT) and one chain tracked tractor (ВТГ).
* **3 agricultural** **collection centers** focusing on forest fruits and agricultural produce (in Voskepar/Noyemberyan cluster) and the other on wheat and wheat processing (in Nerkin Tsaghkavan-Sarigyugh cluster). The collection centers provide services to the farmers in cold storage and processing of fruits and berries (in Voskepar) and wheat storage and milling (in Nerkin Tsaghkavan). In Sarigyugh-Nerkin Tsaghkavan cluster the community development foundation (founded by the help of the Project) is managing both the agro-machinery pool and the collection center.
* **1 seedling greenhouse** in Chinari managed by “Chinari Satsil” women’s cooperative aimed at initial preparatory works for preparing the soil and preparation for the first season of cultivation.
* **1 legume production cooperative** in Norashen as a part of its cooperation with WFP towards establishing a legume value chain in Berd area. A combine harvester for collecting the legume harvest has been transferred to the cooperative.
* **1 horticulture development center and gardening machinery pool** in Ptghavan community to ensure Ayrum Community Development Fund. It is directed to establish a local tree nursery and a seedlings production center.
* **6 trainings** on fruit and herb drying, grape processing/wine making, greenhouse management, horticulture/gardening, bakery/wheat processing, and innovative agriculture involving more than 90 beneficiaries in intensive learning exercise delivered by the experts from Project partner Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS) of Moscow State University, the Russian Federation to deliver a series of seminars for Project beneficiaries covering the topics of fruit and herb drying, grape processing and wine making, innovative agriculture.

**Component 3: Community Sustainability Activities – Energy Efficiency/Sustainable Water Management/Infrastructure Rehabilitation**

In the context of Community Sustainability Activities, the Project installed:

* Rehabilitation of community infrastructures using innovative technologies:
  + **Partial renovation and raising the** **energy efficiency** of Voskevan Culture House;
  + **10 school canteens** **renovating** in 10 communities[[10]](#footnote-10) as part of partnership with WFP and SIFI using for school feeding programme meet the sanitary standards;
  + **31 km street energy lighting system** in 9 communities[[11]](#footnote-11) based on the identified community needs;
* **51 ha of drip irrigation systems** in 7 communities[[12]](#footnote-12) with water-saving technologies in agricultural production;
* **3 km or irrigation water** main pipeline was renovated in Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur and construction of **irrigation system covering 54 ha** of land in Chinari;
* **1 drinking water system** renovation in Itsakar;
* **1 biomass briquetting production** in Ijevan area;
* **1 community guest house** in cooperation with the UNDP Rural Tourism Development Program in Ditavan;
* **3245 LED lamps** for residential buildings for Voskevan, Sarigyugh and Nerkin Tsaghkavan communities as part of national “Bright Border” Initiative.

Listed achievements, analyzed on the basis of targeted values, are clearly demonstrate that Project overachievements at the level of outcomes are the result of overachievements on the level of planned outputs. The Project staff put the emphasis on the socio-economic and environmental situation and capacity building of the beneficiaries during the primary assessments of their needs. By means of revealing the beneficiaries’ potential and their expectations the Project staff achieved the Project objectives by integrating them into the enterprise field.

*“...one of the components of the Project was to study the market and prepare us for it. It was important to understand what kind of opportunities were “inside” and “outside”, how to be competitive, what is offered by the enterprise and how to find “yourself” on the market place. Although the training course was for all there was an individual approach to everybody”.* ***(Direct beneficiary (female), an excerpt from the in-depth interview)***

*“…we were invited to the various training and it declared the start of the cooperation. We organized the meeting, discussions, and seminars in our community and the beneficiaries needed to integrate into it though it was a shock for them initially. We couldn’t imagine if we could work in the enterprise field because we had no suchlike experience before. This kind of cooperation is important first of all because the vulnerable women become integrated into the society, labour market and I can surely affirm they become citizens with rights and they also learn and acquire skills”.* ***(Direct beneficiary (male), an excerpt from the in-depth interview)***

The results of interviews and discussions with the representatives of LSGs and beneficiaries show that the Project activities are more than their expectations. Besides partaking in the training/educational activities, and the organized meetings, the beneficiaries had the opportunity to enjoy the both socio-economical and socio-psychological support from the Project team, the training courses organized in the community and outside of it. As a result, the Project provided its beneficiaries with a whole package of services. The evaluation results prove that the beneficiaries highly appreciate the profession-oriented courses and also the vocational trainings. Better life quality and necessary conditions for the people of vulnerable group is conditioned upon the provision of employment which brings additional sources of profit for them. Hence, it should be noted that this kind of consistency of the Project steps results in continuous changes in conditions of beneficiaries and communities.

Cooperation is inevitable with governmental, international and a range of public institutions and organizations that as a rule know the problems and needs of the beneficiaries and their communities. Sometimes as a result of everyday cooperation the stakeholders present the feedback of beneficiaries regarding the Project staff and provided services.

*“…the beneficiaries are always satisfied with the work of Project stff and their family members told for several times that the Project staff searches for solutions for different problems regardless of their functions“.* ***(Representative of the governmental institution (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

*“...this Project is a great opportunity for women, we treat the Project staff equally, we feel ourselves useful for the community with their help“.* ***(Project beneficiary (female), an excerpt from the in-depth interview)***

Each member of the Project staff had his part of competences in his professional platform. Besides, tools of Project criteria and result monitoring are used by the Project staff with the help of which from time to time they collect data about the expectations and remarks of beneficiaries and stakeholders. Almost all the Project members believe that the feedback mechanisms of vulnerable groups and their communities are best revealed when the acquaintance/relative of the beneficiary personally applies to the Project mentioning the following:

*“…I know that one of my acquaintances is included in the Project and has a great success, I would like my family to have the same changes“.* ***(Representative of the LSG (male), an excerpt from the in-depth interview)***

*“…the one can be protected that has the professional knowledge, life skills and that is in a socio-economic balance and clearly knows his status.* ***(Project beneficiary (female), an excerpt from the in-depth interview)***

The efforts aimed at the improvement of local, professional, financial-economic, environmental and social health conditions of beneficiaries. Evaluation results show that providing women with employment is much more important for various reasons although services and activities of the Project for integration and support are also essential.

*“…the opportunity given by Project and providing women with a job is an example of social integration that should be followed in our community and in the Armenian reality as well“.* ***(Representative of the governmental institution (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

*“...Project is perhaps the most important means to improve the life conditions of the beneficiary women, provide with an upward social mobility for community and therefore ensure higher social-economic status for them“.****(Representative of the in international organization (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

The results of interviews with the beneficiaries show that due to the core and professional trainings both in groups and individually, coaching, round table-discussions and meetings with private sector and governmental bodies they have acquired necessary skills and knowledge that enables them to apply their skills and experience collectively as an enterprise, to develop business canvas for enterprise and participatory capacity improvement plans, to cover the marketing, management, production and financial components of business plans.

One of the strengths of the beneficiaries is that they had the opportunity to participate in training courses and seminars on different topics by both local and international experts. People cooperating with the Project, experts, beneficiaries and community members highlighted several characteristics of the Project and Project staff such as professionalism, high level of awareness, punctuality, consistency, devotion, diligence, and honesty without which it could be impossible to make this complex Project come true.

*“...concerning the personal characteristics of the Project team, I would like to mention that they are interesting, honest and experienced people. To my surprise it is their system, they have worked in that field and it is their style...They are very cordial and share everything. The team is united, the main objectives are visible and critical situations are absent, they all have the same system of values, they always discuss things with one another and there is a leadership which is harmonic and acceptable in this sense“.* ***(Representative of International organization (female), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

Concerning to what extent has the Project adapted to changing external conditions (risks and assumptions) in order to ensure benefits for the target groups, it is necessary to notice about below-mentioned risk categories:

* Political – 1) Worsening of the situation on Armenia-Azerbaijan border (cease-fire violations) in 2016. It created difficulties/security restrictions for operating in certain communities and impose risk for sustainability of actions. 2) The internal political situation in Armenia restricted and delayed the Project implementation in the target communities.
* Financial – 1) Fluctuations of currency exchange rates, increase of prices for materials, equipment, machinery etc. In case of restrictions to effectively operate in certain communities that result in considerable implementation constraints relevant project activities and budgets have been adjusted accordingly. 2) Lack of adequate management and financial resources, after the completion of the Project. Prepared a communication plan with the communities regarding the capacity and scale of the Project. The continuous search for partners (institutional donors, government, and private parties) to provide resources for components of the plans not covered under this Project.
* Operational - limited resources to address all the components necessary for the community. Attracted additional co-funding from the communities and beneficiaries, establishing public-private partnerships, leveraged funds from other organizations/projects operating in the region.

***5.3 PROJECT effIcIenCY***

The efficiency of the Project is defined as the extent of economic resources or inputs (e.g., funds, expertise and time) were converted to results.

The Project used one donor fund providing that beneficiaries must ensure at least 20% own contribution in the sub-projects. The programming of the Project team's activities, as a modality to implement complex and innovative interventions, was effective because of being underpinned by robust design logic, with clearly assigned responsibilities among participating, and extensive involvement of national and local partners in all stages of the Project cycle. Furthermore, the Project team knowledge and experience also contributed to improving the Project activities using genuine area-based and community-based approaches that have been shown to be extremely successful in bringing together cluster of communities around shared aims and values.

*“…it has already been proven in practice: in the Project has been utilized as a base for successful coordination at the operational level. Together with flexibility, local position, well-developed communication with local players, and the ability to quickly respond to local needs it were the main reasons for the Project team's central role in Project implementation”.* ***(Representative of the governmental institution (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

The implementation on operational level and its functionality were key elements of the overall intervention efficiency. For a multi-component project intervention, it is necessary to establish a joint “umbrella” governing body, which should enable the functional synergy of separate sub-projects. The project team as a managing structure has succeeded in providing that, putting an additional burden of overall governance on the MTAI, as the only joint body at the decision-making level. It abled the Project team to perform its core functions as a “bridge” between decision-making at the strategic level and operational level on the ground. The Project can serve as a case study for similar projects in the future to avoid such traps as overwhelming by internal and external coordination.

In general, Project's funds and activities have been delivered in a timely manner. Nevertheless, during the Project intervention, three delays of planned activities had occurred. The first delay was at the beginning of the Project caused by the worsening of the situation on Armenia-Azerbaijan border (cease-fire violations) in 2016. It created difficulties/security restrictions for operating in certain communities during some months and impose a risk for the sustainability of actions. The second delay occurred in 2018 and it was caused mainly by the internal political situation in Armenia. It restricted and delayed Project implementation in the target communities, but despite that, the project continued acting in accordance with the principles of neutrality and impartiality. The third delay was caused mainly by the purchasing and transportation of agro equipment, materials, machinery from outside of the country. Having in mind that these problems affected all on-going interventions in the country, it could not be counted as the Project failure to deliver, nor as a result of poor risk mitigation planning. On the contrary, taking into consideration the Project period, the Project succeeded to deliver not only initially planned achievements but also some additional results; it could be underlined as a proof of overall Project efficiency.

Overachievement of the Project is to a large degree based on a well-structured budget and efficient implementation structure, including financial implementation. Therefore, it could be stated that achieved results well justify the costs of intervention. The overall approach and exercised principles of optimized financial management cannot be replaced by some other approach, which could enable achievement of the same results with fewer investments of resources. In the process of project development, the budget has been designed with a distinctively low rate of administrative costs in the overall intervention amount: 8.39% of overall Project costs have been allocated to administrative cost. It indicates that the initially planned costs were optimized and provided a solid basis for efficient financial implementation.

***5.4 PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY***

The sustainability of the Project is defined as the extent the benefits of the project continue after external development assistance has withdrawn, as well as relevant social, economic, political, institutional, and other conditions are present and projections about the national capacity to maintain, manage and ensure the development results in the future.

The Project initiatives directed towards adding value to the local products and creating value chains generate significant economic returns and spill-overs for the communities. In addition, the creation of institutional mechanisms for delivering local public services and managing the hard infrastructure provided by the Project guarantee the sustainability of the interventions and their longevity. The Project has provided comprehensive support to the beneficiaries starting from capacity-development up to the provision of production means helping them to design an unimpeded “creation chains” without gaps. One of the main factors of the Project sustainability is the degree of ownership (at lease 20%). Throughout the Project implementation, a high level of local ownership was identified, given, among other aspects, that the sub-projects were based on local needs and built upon local capacities. Since the sub-projects have been highly relevant given that there was a strong emphasis on community aspects, addressing livelihood needs and pertinent adaptation, this contributed to a high possibility of sustainability with the projects having fitted into local issues and needs. Therefore, the sustainability aspects for the developments included built-in mechanisms for income generation of secured financing to cover operational maintenance of the facilities set-up by the project; as well as promoting and enforcing a sense of ownership and responsibility in local communities and government bodies towards set-up structures. This approach has enabled the economic empowerment of local beneficiariess through engagement in primary and secondary sustainable agricultural production and improved their livelihoods through facilitating access to rehabilitated infrastructure.

*“…the replication and community-to-community reproduction of the Projects’ activities is the main indicator that in many circumstances the Project is likely to be sustainable in many cases in the mid- to long-term. We are going to implement this Project as a model in various regions of Armenia”.* ***(Representative of the governmental institution (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

*“…with this Project the Project team succeeds in changing the attitude of society and market which is based on stereotypes and to make this true by means of joint efforts of the cross-sector partnerships. Their activities were pursuing a comprehensive, targeted, constant and effective policy to promote the communities socio-economically, as well as environmentally”.* ***(Representative of the in international organization (female), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

It has been mentioned multiple times that the representatives of beneficiary communities have obtained various skills and knowledge, equipment and assistance, have developed their abilities in the business model that makes it possible to act independently. Many cases were recorded when the beneficiaries found partners themselves, managed to present their entrepreneur and the products or services acquired in the scope of the Project. As a result, they seemed reliable for the partners and were accepted as enterprises. Besides, the Project enabled the beneficiaries to cope with the difficulties when it comes to demonstrating their vocational abilities, to show great productivity, to overcome the hardships of adaptation and integration in the market.

***5.5 PROJECT IMPACT***

The impact of the Project is defined as the extent changes in human development and people’s wellbeing that are brought about by development initiatives, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. At the regional and community level in each of the area where the sub-projects took place, a series of positive impacts have been identified.

* CDPs had a a practical application in designing the work in the communities both by UNDP or other external donors as well as LSGs;
* Improved economic conditions of the beneficiaries of greenhouses, wineries, orchards - increased the income-level of households through extending the seasonality of growing fresh vegetables. On the grounding training on cultivation, pest management and fertilizing techniques was provided to all the beneficiary households;
* Increased availability of agricultural services in the region (machinery, equipment) which results in bigger volume of agricultural production, especially, increased the area of cultivated land and improving the efficiency of wheat harvest. The machinery allowed the beneficiaries to decrease the harvest losses by 35% (5% compared to 40% formerly). Now the horticultural center is under construction and is planned to be the first of its kind in the area providing a comprehensive agricultural services to the locals and test progressive agricultural practices;
* No water loss in communities - These systems saved up to 50% of irrigation water, thus increasing water availability to more beneficiaries and using water resources in a more economic way.
* Higher water savings in communities – These systems were abled to produce higher-quality products, thus, increasing their income and decreasing the water loss because of dilapidated pipelines.
* Created employment opportunities for local population;
* Decreased lightning costs of each individual household in three communities in the region - the communities was abled to save on street lighting component and had a safer environment in the center of the communities due to improved lighting of the streets.

Although fully aware that long-term adaptation and resiliency are two factors difficult to measure within the short life span of the sub-projects, Project reports indicate that beneficiary communities have certainly aided in the short term in reducing communities’ vulnerability and strengthening the resilience of those ecosystems that communities depend upon for their livelihoods. The positive impacts identified have taken different forms such as through several types of activities, namely, the promotion of sustainable agriculture adaptive to community needs and climate conditions (for example, with the introduction of agricultural practices or crops) or practices that aid in mitigating environmental change’s negative impacts (such as rehabilitation and improvement of existing orchards and vineyards). In other communities, the renovation of infrastructure and other properties in order to improve resource efficiency was implemented, as well as through several different water management actions.

*“…the activities and on-the-ground actions have of the Project had impacts through their combination of core and fundamental knowledge with innovative technologies of the responsible party. Furthermore, adaptation measures have been flexible and appropriate for each specific community in order to adjust to local conditions, needs, and vulnerabilities.* ***(Representative of the LSG (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

Nevertheless, all activities have generated local capacity and community resiliency. The generation of capacity, through a targeted capacity sub-projects addressing capacity gaps and needs in community-based adaptation, is a key factor, not only for the Project’s impact but also for its mainstreaming and scaling up.

A unique sort of impact has been the effect that the Project approach has had on other programs and sub-projects. That is the field-tested methodologies in which communities (bottom-up approach) have been the driving force as opposed to top-down approaches which are common in large adaptation projects.

*“…perhaps, this Project, being the only pioneer UNDP project with so huge tangible results have shown that working from bottom-up is the main effective and important way of addressing adaptation for those who are impacted most: the bordered, poor and vulnerable communities”.* ***(Representative of the in international organization (male), an excerpt from the key informant interview)***

As the positive changes produced by a development intervention (directly or indirectly), we can mark that the Project supported 45 bordering communities from 3 areas of Tavush region with:

* Community development schemes, which had a practical application in designing the intervention methods in the communities both by UNDP or other external donors as well as LSGs.
* Community sustainability activities on agriculture and agro-processing (namely, establishing agricultural machinery pools, energy/water-efficient greenhouses, agro-processing units, collection centers, improvement of orchards and vineyards, and development learning courses and specific training courses), which improved economic conditions and employment opportunities for local population, resulted in bigger volume of agricultural production.
* From perspective of people community sustainability activities on energy efficiency, sustainable water management, and infrastructure rehabilitation, which improved security in communities, decreased heating and cooling costs, improved irrigation system, higher water savings and no water loss, decreased lightning costs of each individual household in three communities, as well as cleaner school canteens with sanitary requirements.

***5.6 PROJECT VISIBILITY***

To evaluate the visibility of the project it is necessary to pay attention to the demonstration of several promotional and communication materials elaborated and used during the Project, as well as focus on the activities regarding meetings, round table-discussions, and cooperations with representatives of local NGOs, international organizations, private sector, and state agencies, collaboration with media, participation in events and market fairs, membership to networks, organization exchange visits to similar businesses, mentorship cycles both in community and state level. To this aim, the events were publicized through traditional, printing, online and social media.

1. Facebook posts;
2. Facebook video posts;
3. Facebook status;
4. Facebook events;
5. Facebook films;
6. Official Instagram page;
7. Articles on magazine;
8. Announcements on magazine;
9. Film trailers;
10. Film teasers;
11. Film announcements;
12. Films on YouTube;
13. TV reports on YouTube;
14. TV reports on digital media;
15. TV programmes;
16. TV reports;
17. Interview announcement on TV;
18. Articles on digital media;
19. Programmes for digital media.

***5.7 LESSONS LEARNED***

To sum up, it can be safely concluded that the Project has been very successful, not only with regard to pioneering approaches to deal with the socio-economic problems and improve the environmental condition for local vulnerable communities in the bordering Tavush region but also in terms of results and possible replication and with regard to scaling up. The preceding list presents lessons learned that can be drawn up based on the information available.

LESSON 1. While co-financing can sometimes be an obstacle to undertake a venture through small-scale enterprises for the local farmers, still it reinforces the sense of ownership and is an absolute must to ensure the longevity of the project’s impact. So, the co-funding requirement is still a strong indicator and tool to increase the project ownership and it helps to identify the main beneficiary for the most successful project implementation.

LESSON 2. Thanks to the wide collaboration with other international and local organizations, the communities, and beneficiaries manage to find the required co-financing funds. For the same reason, a strong institutional basis supported by the local community should be established for a medium, community-oriented joint production.

LESSON 3. All the sub-projects whether in partnership with the local municipality or the community should be endorsed by a representative and independent committee or/and the community council, to ensure that the initiative is taken by the consent of the community.

LESSON 4. There should be a stronger link between the community development plans and the initiatives and local development strategies offered by the Government to fine-tune the efforts, ensure synergy and mutual support.

**6. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In general, the Project notwithstanding its limitations and risks has been very important. Summarizing the results of the evaluation according to the major components it is important to mention the following revelations and **conclusions**:

CONCLUSION 1.ISRDBRC is a highly relevant Project, successfully aligned with country and region development framework, strategies, as well as with MTAI targets. Global Partners’ relations (MTAI and UNDP) and expectations have been clearly detailed in the cooperation agreement and clearly understood from the Projects’ onset, by defining working relationships, inputs by each partner, and providing for joint visibility.

CONCLUSION 2.Three componential structure of the Project successfully demonstrated implementation of RRF actions on a complex multi-sector intervention. The Project initiatives directed towards adding value to the local products and creating value chains generate significant economic returns and spill-over for the communities. They also directed towards strong institutional basis for agricultural machinery pools, legume production cooperative, agricultural collection centers and community development funds.

CONCLUSION 3.The strengths of the Project had been during the implementation by strong participation at community levels and efficient operational planning and flexible and strong follow up of field implementation. The Project promoted an integrated vision of local development, following an area- and outcome-based development approach. The effects of the intervention at both outcomes and impact levels are overachieved: most of the outcome indicators are significantly higher than targeted values. Overall results of the Project are demonstrating a high level of sustainability expectancy. The basis for results’ sustainability is developed primarily through strong local participation and ownership, including local capacity building approach.

CONCLUSION 4.Project provided knowledge and services for the benefit of vulnerable groups. Specific, innovative services have been created in agriculture and agro-processing for the rural population. The incorporation of gender issues was a positive key aspect of the region to local activities, and of the knowledge management products. Gender mainstreaming gave visibility of the socio-economic issues upon women and worked towards equitable inclusion and adaptation issues.

CONCLUSION 5.The strongest point of the managerial structure was the Project team, which demonstrated a high level of flexibility and ability to react promptly to the identified needs of direct and indirect beneficiaries. M&E system of intervention was initial point of project implementation, and it was revised and substantially improved during the implementation, providing necessary inputs for project management and final evaluation. Project management and vulnerability assessment tools, instruments, knowledge products, and methodologies have been used for the sub-projects, were successful as far they helped in mobilizing local groups and addressed local needs. Time management was justified and all funds were used in line with Project goals and contributed to the overall Project’s delivery and results. Budget structure and efficient financial implementation construed the Project's actual results.

CONCLUSION 6.Media and CSO sectors have been involved in the Project phase providing visibility. Better communication between local, regional, and national authorities has been established. ISRDBRC succeeded to generate a successful structural model/platform for an implementation of a complex multi-agency/multi-beneficiary intervention and for creating synergy with other donor interventions in the region.

CONCLUSION 7.The security situation remains one of the main priorities and concerns in the region.

Based on the results of the evaluation we can bring forward the following **recommendations**:

RECOMMENDATION 1.The Project represents a successful model-platform for complex multi-agencies/multi-beneficiary intervention and its application should be further promoted. The Project ought to support and scale-up models of sustainable production and processing in the communities resulting in income raise for the households in the rural areas. All the models should be to the biggest extent inclusive targeting women, the youth, and other vulnerable groups and should ensure decent jobs and comprehensive support from the stage of consulting to capacity building and provision of production means. The Project’s innovative management model of community-based organizations should be replicated as a prerequisite to the sustainability of the Project interventions. Given the Project's positive results, a continuation would be highly recommended, not only attempting to replicate and upscale the activities already carried out, but also moving beyond expanding work in other regions and in other communities.

RECOMMENDATION 2.The Project should be implemented in its well-developed visibility strategy making sure that the success stories were on spot locally and regionally and the Project-funded assets and construction had better be easily identifiable for the locals and the donors.

RECOMMENDATION 3.Collaboration with international organizations and local agencies, also paying attention to the engagement of the private sector, would rather continue to be nurtured and strengthened.

RECOMMENDATION 4.In order to reinforce initial benefits and build upon them, future directions ought to consider reinforcing the positive aspects demonstrated by this Project in respect to the community-based approaches discussed in this document and build upon what has been field-tested and proven as demonstrated by the achievement of the Project and its local-level sub-projects.

**7. ANnexes**

**Annex 1. ToR for Evaluation**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Job title: Project Final Evaluation

**Project title:** **Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities**

Contract modality: Individual Contract (IC)

Duration: 14 July-14 August, 2020

Duty station: Yerevan, Armenia (alternative option online evaluation because of COVID-19)

**Background:**

**Project budget:** USD 5,251,340.87

“Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities” (ISRDBRC) Project is financed by the Government of the Russian Federation and was implemented in bordering communities of Tavush Region of the Republic of Armenia over five years. The overall goal of the project is to ensure balanced development of RA regions through an integrated socio-economic approach, as well as raising the quality of life and income level of the local population in bordering areas of Tavush region.

The Project has three main components:

*Development planning.* Will include elaboration of participatory integrated community development plans for 45 communities with consideration of socio-economic and environmental, including disaster risk reduction, pillars.

*Community sustainability activities – Agriculture and agro-processing.* Will include: sector-specific capacity building, establishment of agricultural machinery pools, construction of small greenhouses, establishment of small-scale contemporary agro-processing units, establishment/improvement of orchards/vineyards, and establishment of collection centers, etc.

*Community sustainability activities – Energy Efficiency/sustainable water management/infrastructure rehabilitation.* Will include: rehabilitation of community infrastructures with focus on energy efficiency, introduction of water saving technologies, ensuring access to safe drinking water, etc.

It is supposed that the residents of all 45 bordering communities of Tavush region, with an overall population of 62,000, will get direct or indirect benefits from the project in the form of: access to quality infrastructures, collection center of agricultural products and parks of agricultural machinery, as well as employment in agricultural and agro-processing sectors.

**Objective of Assignment:**

The final evaluation of the Project is designed to measure results and, if available at this stage already, the impact of the project.

In particular, this external evaluation will focus on evaluating and learning from the project results and lessons throughout the project implementation. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will inform the future initiatives by UNDP Armenia, the Government of Armenia, and the main stakeholders.

In this context, the evaluation will assess how the project has contributed towards its expected outcome of enabling the economic empowerment of locals through engagement in primary and secondary sustainable agricultural production and improved their livelihoods through facilitating access to rehabilitated infrastructure through participatory community development planning.

The final evaluation will assess how the project achieved its goal of participatory community planning, income generation through agriproduction and processing, and rehabilitated community infrastructures in 45 borderline communities of Tavush region and evaluate the replicability of the interventions.

The results and recommendations will be used by UNDP broadly and by UNDP in Armenia in particular as a basis for future rural development interventions at the national and local levels, in view of the continued cooperation with the Government of Armenia and the main stakeholders.

The independent external evaluation will be conducted by an independent expert. The evaluation will assess the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the project and will provide recommendations regarding the impact of the project. As stipulated in the project document the main stakeholders and, partners of the project is the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (ex RA MTAD) of Armenia.

**Scope of work**

In accordance with UNDP evaluation guidelines[[13]](#footnote-13), the evaluation will assess the performance of ISRDBRC project in achieving its intended outputs and results (contribution or attribution to outcomes) as per the associated CPD theories of change. The evaluation will assess the project’s effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact and sustainability. The evaluation will also review and provide the project’s impact on individuals and households in a disaggregated way.

The specific objectives are:

1. To assess project’s achieved outputs vis-à-vis the Results and Resources Framework.
2. To assess the project’s attribution and contribution to achieved outcomes, indicating also strengths, weaknesses and unexpected results (projects’ by-products).
3. Indicate Project’s contribution/attribution to the achievement of Country Programme Document outputs and outcomes.
4. To determine the overall efficiency in the utilization of resources in achieving results.
5. To assess the appropriateness of the design of the project and the implementation arrangements, including but not limited to the project modality, organizational structure, and coordination mechanisms set up to support the project.
6. To assess the extent to which the project has contributed to the creation of an enabling environment, and the extent to which this has helped shape effective government policies and programming on disaster management and risk reduction.
7. To assess the sustainability of results and provide recommendations for sustaining the benefits of the project and how to improve sustainability in future initiatives.
8. To assess the approach to capacity development and whether initiatives have contributed to sustainability.
9. To review the effectiveness of the gender mainstreaming strategy and partnership strategy.
10. To gain insights into the level of client satisfaction with the project. The clients include community and local government beneficiaries; national government partners and donors.
11. To identify best practices and lessons learned which can be replicated.

The core criteria to be considered in this evaluation are as follows:

* **Relevance:** the extent to which intended outputs and outcomes of the project are consistent with national and local policies and priorities and the needs of intended beneficiaries.
* **Effectiveness:** the extent to which the intended results have been achieved and whether opportunities created by the project were equally accessible for women and men.
* **Efficiency:** how economically resources or inputs (e.g., funds, expertise and time) were converted to results.
* **Sustainability:** the extent to which benefits of the project continue after external development assistance has withdrawn. This includes evaluating the extent to which relevant social, economic, political, institutional, and other conditions are present and, based on that assessment making projection about the national capacity to maintain, manage and ensure the development results in the future.
* **Impact:** changes in human development and people’s wellbeing that are brought about by development initiatives, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA. INDICATIVE EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

In accordance with UNDP evaluation guidelines, specific questions related to each of criteria can include the following:

**Relevance:** evaluate the pertinence of project objectives and purposes in relation to the project expected results (impact), target groups, direct and indirect beneficiaries.

1. What is the present level of relevance of the project?
2. Are the project overall objectives consistent with, and supportive of Partner Government policies?
3. Does the project still respond to the needs of the key partners?
4. Are the project objectives and results clear and logical, and do they address clearly identified needs?
5. Are there suitable and informative targets, e.g. are they Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART)?
6. Are the activities planned appropriately to achieve output(s) and whether the output(s) lead to the expected project outcome?
7. Is the current design sufficiently supported by all stakeholders?
8. Have key stakeholders been involved in the design process?
9. Are coordination, management and financing arrangements clearly defined and do they support institutional strengthening and local ownership?
10. Are the objectives clearly understood by the project partners?
11. If applicable: How well has the project design been adapted to make it more relevant? Was it straightforward to do contractually?
12. Have the relevant cross-cutting issues (environment, gender, human rights and governance, donor coordination or others) been adequately mainstreamed in the project design?
13. Was the project aligned with government and UNDP priorities?
14. Was the project appropriate to the local context?

**Effectiveness:** evaluate project effectiveness and to what extent has the project produced its desired objectives.

1. How well is the project achieving its planned results?
2. Have the planned results to date been achieved?
3. Are the targets for the project appropriate and are they being reported against?
4. What is the quality of the results/services available?
5. Are there any factors which prevent target groups accessing the results/services?
6. To what extent has the project adapted or is able to adapt to changing external conditions (risks and assumptions) in order to ensure benefits for the target groups?
7. Are the risks and assumptions holding true? Are risk management arrangements in place?
8. To what extent are unplanned positive effects contributing to results produced/ services provided?

**Efficiency:** evaluate to what degree have resources been optimally used during project implementation, and has the project achieved satisfactory level of cost effectiveness.

1. How well are inputs/resources being managed?
2. To what degree are inputs provided/ available on time to implement activities from all parties involved?
3. To what degree are inputs provided/ available at planned cost (or lower than planned), from all parties involved?
4. Are project resources managed in a transparent and accountable manner?
5. Are all contractual procedures clearly understood and do they facilitate the implementation of the project?
6. How well is the implementation of activities managed?
7. Is an activity schedule (or work plan) and resource schedule available and used by the project management and other relevant parties?
8. To what extent are activities implemented as scheduled? If there are delays how can they be rectified?
9. Are funds committed and spent in line with the implementation timescale? If not, why not?
10. How well are activities monitored by the project and are corrective measures taken if required?
11. If appropriate, how flexible is the project in adapting to changing needs?
12. If appropriate how does the project co-ordinate with other similar interventions to encourage synergy and avoid overlaps?
13. How well are outputs achieved?
14. Have all planned outputs been delivered to date? And in a logical sequence?
15. What is the quality of outputs to date?
16. Are the outputs achieved likely to contribute to the intended results?
17. Are they correctly reflected through the targets?
18. Do the inter-institutional structures e.g. steering committees, technical team meeting and monitoring systems, allow efficient project implementation?
19. Have all partners been able to provide their financial and/or other contributions?

**Sustainability:** evaluate the contribution to sustainability of benefit streams (to what extent benefits will continue after the life of the project).

1. Is sustainability an integral part of the design i.e. is there a phase out/hand over strategy?
2. Is the sustainability strategy fully understood by the partners?
3. If the services/results have to be supported institutionally, are funds likely to be made available? If so, by whom?
4. Are the services/results affordable for the key partners at the completion of project?
5. What is the level of ownership of the project by key partners and will it continue after the end of external support?
6. How far the project is embedded in local structures?
7. To what extent are relevant key partners actively involved in decision-making concerning project orientation and implementation?
8. What is the likelihood that key partners will continue to make use of relevant results?
9. Do the key partners have any plans to continue delivering the stream of benefits and if so, are they likely to materialise?
10. What is the level of policy support provided and the degree of interaction between project and policy level?
11. What support has been provided from the relevant national, sectoral and budgetary policies?
12. Do changes in government policies and priorities affect the project and how well is it adapting in terms of long-term needs for support?
13. Are the material, services and equipment support likely to continue after the project has finished?
14. How well is the project contributing to institutional and management capacity?
15. What lessons can be drawn from the coordination efforts and working arrangements between the project team, its counterparts/beneficiaries, and partner organizations?

**Impact:** evaluate the project impact, if available at this early stage.

1. What are the direct impact prospects of the project on individuals and households in a disaggregated way?
2. Are any external factors likely to jeopardize the project’s direct impact?
3. To what extent does/will the project have any indirect positive and/or negative impacts? (e.g., social, cultural, gender, economic)
4. Have there been/will there be any unplanned positive impacts on the planned key partners or other non-targeted communities arising from the project? How did this affect the impact?
5. Did the project take timely measures for mitigating the unplanned negative impacts? What was the result?

**Recommendations, lessons learned and best practices**

Provide key recommendations related to the project design, implementation, management, management of resources, programmatic response.

1. What lessons can be learned from the project implementation in order to improve performance, result and effectiveness in the future.

**EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation will be conducted through a qualitative assessment method. The evaluation phases shall include, but not be limited to:

* A desk review of relevant reports and data that will mainly address qualitative issues.
* Submission to and discussion of the proposed methodology with UNDP (inception report)
* Field-research and visiting partners and beneficiaries.
* Preparation of the evaluation report, findings and recommendations.
* Review findings with stakeholders/partners and preparing a follow-up action plan to implement accepted recommendations

**Duties and responsibilities:**

Consistent with the above general scope, the Consultant will work closely with CO Evaluation Manager, Socio-Economic Portfolio Manager, ISRDBRC Project Manager and the team. The Consultant will perform the following duties:

* **Submission/discussion of Evaluation Methodology**

Evaluation methodology should be submitted and discussed with/approved by UNDP Senior Management, CO Evaluation Manager, Socio-Economic Portfolio Manager, ISRDBRC Project Manager.

* **Desk Review**

During the desk review, the written material that should be examined may include but not be limited to:

* The original Project Document and any subsequent costed work-plans;
* Project reports with key budgetary information;
* Minutes and conclusions of steering committee meetings;
* Summaries of the participatory processes;
* Information on the activities of project implementation team;
* Project’s communication materials
* Any other material that would deem relevant.
* **Field Visit**
* Online and/or where possible face-to-face interviews with the stakeholders, including members of the project implementation team. The evaluation team should provide, some days in advance of their visit, a note summarizing those issues that they would particularly look to explore further and a proposed schedule.
* Discussions with the key partners, target audience, and relevant stakeholders.
* **Presentation of Results, Reporting and Final Submission**

The final output of the evaluation will be a comprehensive report in UNDP format outlining the methodology pursued and main findings of the evaluation, including lessons learned and recommendations. The findings of the evaluation will be presented by the evaluator to UNDP as well as to the Project Board for review and inputs. Inputs will be integrated final evaluation report will be submitted to UNDP on the date agreed.

**Required Qualifications:**

**Education:** Advanced Education in relevant field (e.g., Economics, Social Science and Development, Business Administration, International Development, etc.)

**Experience:**

At least 5 years of proven experience in project evaluation under UNDP and/or other international organizations in the area of integrated rural development, area development, or community development;

Proven practical experience in information gathering and research methodology; experience in data analysis by using innovative approaches and goof writing of prompt recommendations.

**Languages:**

Proficiency in the Armenian and English languages are required. The Evaluation report should be submitted in English, while the interaction with beneficiaries and stakeholders should be done in Armenian.

**Competencies:**

* Demonstrated experience with project/programme assessments, evaluations;
* Proficiency in monitoring and evaluation techniques including in-depth interviews; focus group discussion and participatory information collection techniques;
* Strong analytical capacity;
* Advanced experience in working with government agencies (central and local), civil society organizations and international organizations;
* Understanding of country community development and consolidation context in Armenia is an asset;
* Advanced communication capacity;
* Ability to work efficiently and provide high quality outputs under time pressure;
* Advanced IT and Microsoft Office operating capacities.

**Terms and Conditions for provision of services:**

* The assignment will be a combination of in country missions and the desk study. Site visits or online evaluation modality will be discussed to avoid any risks of COVID-19 for interviewer and interviewees.
* UNDP reserves a right to terminate the contract at any phase if the requirements as per the TOR are not met.

**Expected result:**

Submit the expected written outputs above in printed and electronic versions; MS Word (.doc) format including MS PowerPoint (.ppt) presentation if necessary.

**Evaluator Ethics:**

Evaluation consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct (Annex E) upon acceptance of the assignment. UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the [UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'](http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines).

**Evaluation timeframe (indicative):**

The total duration of the evaluation will be 23 days according to the following plan:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | Timing |
| **Preparation** | 3 days |
| **Evaluation Mission** | 5 days (alternative online modality) |
| **Draft Evaluation Report** | 11 days |
| **Final Report** | 4 days |

Evaluation deliverables:

The evaluator is expected to deliver the following:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Deliverable | Content | Timing | Responsibilities |
| 1. **Inception Report** | Evaluator provides clarifications on timing and method | No later than 2 weeks before the evaluation mission. | Evaluator submits to UNDP ISRDBRC Project |
| 1. **Presentation** | Initial Findings | End of evaluation mission | To UNDP ISRDBRC Project Manager, UNDP SED Programme Officer |
| 1. **Draft Final Report** | Full report, (per annexed template) with annexes | Within 3 weeks of the evaluation mission | Sent to UNDP ISRDBRC Project Manager and UNDP SED Programme Officer for revision |
| 1. **Final Report\*** | Revised report | Within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft | Sent to UNDP ISRDBRC Project Manager and UNDP SED Programme Officer for uploading to UNDP ERC. |

\*When submitting the final evaluation report, the evaluator is required also to provide an 'audit trail', detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final evaluation report.

**Payment mode:**

100% of the payment will be made upon effective conclusion of the Deliverablesand submission and approval by UNDP.

**Annex 1: The Report should include but not be limited to the following headings**

* Title and opening pages;
* Table of contents;
* Introduction;
* Description of the intervention;
* Evaluation Scope and objectives;
* Evaluation approach and methodology;
* Data analysis, Findings and conclusion;
* Recommendations;
* Lessons learned;
* Annex(s), including interview questions.

**Annex 2. Interview Questions**

The UNDP Armenia is conducting an evaluation of “Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities” Project among Project partners, governmental counterparts, beneficiaries, and other relevant stockholders on the implementation period from 2015 to 2020.

The purpose of this evaluation is to collect information on the nature and extent of efforts toward the achievement of goals, challenges or unintended consequences that may have emerged during implementation, good practices and lessons learned, and suggestions on how to enhance future implementation. Please note that all responses will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used as part of aggregated data in this evaluation.

Please note that all responses will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used generalized in this evaluation.

**INTRODUCTION**

Explain objectives of the evaluation, the purpose of the meeting, address all the evaluation questions and outline the topics for discussion, including in the context of Project:

* **Relevance**: the extent to which intended outputs and outcomes of the project are consistent with national and local policies and priorities and the needs of intended beneficiaries?
* **Effectiveness**: the extent to which the intended results have been achieved and whether opportunities created by the project were equally accessible for women and men?
* **Efficiency**: how economically resources or inputs (e.g., funds, expertise and time) were converted to results?
* **Sustainability**: the extent to which benefits of the project continue after external development assistance has withdrawn? The extent to which relevant social, economic, political, institutional, and other conditions are present? What are projections about the national capacity to maintain, manage and ensure the development results in the future?
* **Impact**: what are changes in human development and people’s wellbeing that are brought about by development initiatives, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?

*Basic Information about Respondents*

1. Please, introduce yourself: age, gender, residence, education, profession, employment (in case of direct beneficiaries and households also information about their family: family members, their gender, age, education, employment).
2. Please, describe how your work is related to the Project and how long have you been working on it?

**QUESTIONS**

*Part I. Project Relevance*

1. Describe, please, the purpose and objectives of the Project within several sentences making accent marks on three components of the Project. To what extent are the Project objectives still valid?
2. How was the Project introduced/integrated into current policies pursued by the state and what role did your organization play in establishing its direction and priorities? What steps have been taken for its compliance?
3. How was the Project planned and managed? How was the Project design developed? Have key stakeholders been involved in the design process and was it supported by them? Were the responsibilities of key stakeholders clearly defined?
4. Have the relevant cross-cutting issues (environment, gender, human rights and governance, donor coordination or others) been adequately mainstreamed in the Project design? What steps have been taken for its compliance?
5. How has the Project responded to important changes in the national/regional/local context (changes in policies or priorities)? Has it been effective in responding to change? As needs change, is the approach flexible enough to respond and adapt?
6. How were key stockholders, beneficiaries, target groups and key partners involved in the Project and selected for putting in the work plan? To which needs of them was the Project addressed to? How were their needs evaluated? Were the objectives clearly understood by the Project partners?
7. Were coordination, management, and financing arrangements clearly defined, and did they support institutional strengthening and local ownership?

*Part II. Project Effectiveness*

1. How well was the Project achieving its planned result in the: (a) development planning; (b) agriculture and agro-processing; (c) community infrastructure rehabilitation? How many beneficiaries (people, communities) have been affected by each of the components? What is the quality of the results/services available?
2. How has the implementation contributed to changes in attitudes, policies, or practices that address demographic changes? In what sectors (social, cultural, gender, economic, agricultural, environmental, etc.), and at what levels (national, regional, local)?
3. What were the key achievements and innovations as well as challenges and constraints of implementation? What kind of difficulties did the Project staff encounter during the Project implementation?
4. How have improvements met the needs of beneficiary groups? What strategies were in place in ensuring Project activities reach target communities? Were there any factors (internal, external) which prevent target groups from accessing the results/services, and influence on the non-achievement of the objectives? Which ones? How did you overcome these difficulties and challenges?
5. To what extent has the project adapted/is able to adapt to changing external conditions (risks and assumptions) in order to ensure benefits for the target groups? Are/were the risks and assumptions holding true? Are/were risk management arrangements in place?
6. To what extent are unplanned positive effects contributing to results produced/services provided? Have the experiences gained in support of specific communities and target groups contributed to improvements in the national/regional/local response to relevant challenges? How? Bring examples, please?

*Part III. Project Efficiency*

1. How well were the inputs/resources, implementation of activities and procedures being managed? What were the transparent and accountable mechanisms to manage the implementation of the Project? Were these mechanisms effective? Why or why not?
2. Were the activities towards implementation completed from all parties involved in a timely manner? If no, please describe key challenges to the timeliness of implementation?
3. Were the activities toward implementation cost-effective from all parties involved? If no, please describe key challenges to the cost-effectiveness of implementation?
4. How were activities monitored against schedule or work plans and how were changes made when required? If there were delays how they were rectified? Were there mechanisms to monitor the cost-effectiveness of activities (achievements of outputs in relation to inputs)?
5. How did the implementing partners and other key actors coordinate their efforts to make sure they made the best possible contribution and that there was a reduction of overlap/maximum coverage of areas and people?
6. Has implementation fostered any innovative ways of strengthening the provision or delivery of services? How are the results of implementation documented and shared among key stakeholders?
7. Have all planned outputs delivered in a timely manner and in a logical sequence? If no, please describe key challenges to the timeliness?
8. Were the outputs achieved likely to contribute to the intended results, and were they correctly reflected through the targets? What has been less successful in your view? Why? Was there an opportunity to change the Project along the way?
9. Have all partners been able to provide their financial and/or other contributions?

*Part IV. Project Sustainability*

1. Is there a phase-out/hand over sustainability strategy in the Project design? How the government, implementing partners and other stockholders will coordinate to achieve results and make the best use of their capacities after the Project completion?
2. What will be the future distribution for implementation of the Project among various stakeholders? Are the stakeholders ready to continue the cooperation and support the Project further? If yes, how? If no, why?
3. What is the level of policy support provided and the degree of interaction between project and policy level? What support has been provided from the relevant national, sectoral and budgetary policies? Do changes in government policies and priorities affect the project and how well is it adapting in terms of long-term needs for support?
4. Are the material, services and equipment support likely to continue after the project has finished?
5. How well is the project contributing to institutional and management capacity?
6. What lessons can be drawn from the coordination efforts and working arrangements between the project team, its counterparts/beneficiaries, and partner organizations?

*Part V. Project Impact*

1. How the Project impact with and responds to changes in national/regional/local needs and priorities?
2. Did the Project activities meet the beneficiaries’ expectations? If yes, bring examples. If no, bring examples? How did the Project activities impact in improving the target groups’ condition (social-psychological, cultural, gender, education, job, economic participation)? Bring examples.
3. Are the activities and outputs of the Project consistent with the intended impacts and effects? After the termination of the Project, will the beneficiaries manage to lead an independent life without the support of the Project?
4. How did the Project staff keep in touch with the beneficiaries? What kind of feedback did you receive from the beneficiaries and in what way? Please, bring examples of positive feedback. Tell about negative feedback and complaints.
5. What are the direct impact prospects of the Project on individuals, households, and communities? Are any external factors likely to jeopardize the Project’s direct impact?
6. Have there been/will there be any unplanned positive impacts on the planned key partners or other non-targeted communities arising from the project? How did this affect the impact?

Did the Project take timely measures for mitigating the unplanned negative impacts? If any, what was the result?

**CONCLUSION**

1. Looking back over the last several years, what are the most important contributions and achievements of the Project implementation?
2. If you could do it again, so what would you like to change?
3. Thinking about the future, what are the critical priorities for the Project strategy and what it invests its efforts in?
4. Please, share any other comments or recommendations you may have on the Project design, implementation, management, management of resources, programmatic response, etc.

**Annex 3. List of Individuals Interviewed**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NAME SURNAME** | **ORGANIZATION** | **POSITION** |
| ***IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS*** | | | |
|  | Armen Tiraturyan | UNDP Armenia | Project Manager |
|  | Hripsime Manukyan | UNDP Armenia | Community Development Specialist |
|  | Andrey Harutyunyan | UNDP Armenia | Infrastructure Rehabilitation Specialist |
|  | Harutyun Gevorgyan | UNDP Armenia | Agriculture Specialist |
|  | Manvel Keshishyan | UNDP Armenia | PR Specialist (external) |
| ***GOVERNMENTAL PARTNERS*** | | | |
|  | Ashot Giloyan | Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure | Head of Local Self-Government Policy Department |
|  | Arman Khojoyan | Ministry of Economy | Deputy Minister |
| ***DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS*** | | | |
|  | Lilit Hovhannisyan | Armenian Relief Society | Project Coordinator |
|  | Erik Baghdasaryan | Fund for Armenian Relief | Project Coordinator |
|  | Vahan Arakelyan | World Food Programme | Project Coordinator |
|  | Martin Apyan | International Committee of the Red Cross | Operational Programme Responsible |
|  | Naira Mkrtchyan | AgriConcept (CARD) | Director |
|  | Gayane Sargsyan | Scientific Center of Vegetable and Industrial Crops | Director |
| ***LOCAL-COMMUNITIES PARTNERS*** | | | |
|  | Harutyun Manucharyan | Berd Municipality | Head of Berd Municipality |
|  | Hasmik Melikyan | Berd Community | Secretary of Berd Community |
|  | Hasmik Melikyan | Berd Community | Secretary of Berd Community |
|  | Samvel Saghoyan | Chinari Settlement of Berd Community | Representative of the community |
|  | Kamo Chobanyan | Verin Karmiraghbyur Settlement of Berd Community | Representative of the community |
|  | Samvel Yeghikyan | Varagavan Settlement of Berd Community | Representative of the community |
|  | Karen Dolmazyan | Aknaghbyur Community | Head of Aknaghbyur Community |
|  | Hakob Saribekyan | Ditavan Community | Head of Ditavan Community |
|  | Andranik Virabyan | Khashtarak Community | Head of Khashtarak Community |
|  | Karen Abazyan | Noyemberyan Municipality | Head of Noyemberyan Municipality |
|  | Rafik Ohanyan | Ptghavan Community | Head of Ptghavan Community |
|  | Narek Sahakyan | Noyemberyan Community | Council of Elders of Noyemberyan Community |
| ***STAKEHOLDERS*** | | | |
|  | Anna Virabyan | Khashtarak, Ijevan Area | Greenhouse Beneficiary |
|  | Nakhshun Sarhatyan | Lusahovit, Ijevan Area |
|  | Anna Khalatyan | Tavush, Berd Area |
|  | Miakyel Badalyan | Bagratashen, Noyemberyan Area | Orchard Beneficiary |
|  | Alexandr Ohanyan | Ptghavan, Noyemberyan Area |
|  | Samvel Manucharyan | Aygehovit, Ijevan Area |
|  | Tatul Gabrielyan | Ditavan, Ijevan Area |
|  | Vasak Mirzakhanyan | Verin Karmiraghbyur, Berd Area | Wine Beneficiary |
|  | Rafik Ordyan | Aygedzor, Berd Area |
|  | Davit Mkhitaryan | Tavush, Berd Area |
|  | Tigran Asryan | Aygehovit, Ijevan Area |
|  | Hakob Yeganyan | Aknaghbyur, Ijevan Area | Fruit Drier Beneficiary |
|  | Pavel Ordyan | Aygedzor, Berd Area |
|  | Yuri Vorskanyan | Aygedzor, Berd Area |
|  | Marzpet Mkhitaryan | “Tsakghasar “ Foundation, Ijevan Area | Director |
|  | David Yeganyan | Bakery, Sarigyugh, Ijevan Area | Director |
|  | Anjela Manasyn | Textile Production, Ditavan, Ijevan Area | Director |
|  | Surik Tanbdaryan | Ayrum foundation, Noyemberyan Area | Director |
|  | Gor Abrahamyan | “Tavsho Hatik” Cooperative, Berd Area | Director |
|  | Zarine Mirzoyan | “Chinari Satsil” Cooperative, Berd Area | Accountant |

**Annex 4. List of Supporting Documents reviewed**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Annual Progress Reports** | **Provided by** |
|  | Annual Progress Reports\_2015 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Annual Progress Reports\_2016 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Annual Progress Reports\_2017 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Annual Progress Reports\_2018 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | 2019\_Q4\_Annual\_Standard Porgress Report | UNDP Armenia |
|  | ISRDBRC Short Description\_2020 | UNDP Armenia |
|  |  |  |
|  | **Community Development Plans** |  |
|  | Chinari CDP | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Ditavan CDP | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Navur CDP | UNDP Armenia |
|  |  |  |
|  | **Desisions of Council of Elders of Community** |  |
|  | Desisions of Council of Elders of Chinari Community | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Desisions of Council of Elders of Navur Community | UNDP Armenia |
|  |  |  |
|  | **Minutes of Project Steering Committee Meeting** |  |
|  | Steering Committee Meeting Minutes\_2015 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Steering Committee Meeting Minutes\_2016 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Steering Committee Meeting Minutes\_2017 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Steering Committee Meeting Minutes\_2018 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Steering Committee Meeting Minutes\_2019 | UNDP Armenia |
|  |  |  |
|  | **Project Presentations** |  |
|  | Tavush Project Presentation\_2016 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Tavush Project PSC 2016 Discussion Items | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Tavush Project Presentation\_2017 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Tavush Project Presentation\_2018 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Tavush Project Presentation\_2019 | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Tavush Project Presentation\_2016 | UNDP Armenia |
|  |  |  |
|  | **Announcement samples** |  |
|  | Greenhouse Announcement Sample\_Debedavan | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Orchard Announcement Sample\_Achajur | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Wine Announcement Sample\_Noyemberyan |  |
|  |  | UNDP Armenia |
|  | **Applications** |  |
|  | Greenhouse Application\_Debedavan | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Orchard application\_Achajur | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Wine Application\_Noyemberyan | UNDP Armenia |
|  |  |  |
|  | **Basic Documents** |  |
|  | Approved Community List | UNDP Armenia |
|  | ICPE Armenia\_Full report | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Project Document | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Results Framework | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Risk Log | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Annual/Multiyear Work Plan And Budget From PRODOC | UNDP Armenia |
|  | Output Verification Template | UNDP Armenia |

**Annex 5. Results Framework**[[14]](#footnote-14)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Intended Outcome as stated in the UNDAF/Country [or Global/Regional] Programme Results and Resource Framework:**  **OUTCOME 1.2. Vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme [or Global/Regional] Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:**  **Proportion of employed population living in poverty, Baseline- 22.4 Target 2015 - 5**  **Ratio of unemployment rate of women to the unemployment rate of men Baseline- 1.6 Target 2015 -1.3** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan:**  **1.2.1. National and local capacities to develop and implement innovative and diversified income-generating policies and practices targeting the most vulnerable groups strengthened.** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Project title and Atlas Project Number:** **Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities 00081907** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **EXPECTED OUTPUTS** | **OUTPUT INDICATORS[[15]](#footnote-15)** | **DATA SOURCE** | **BASELINE** | | TARGETS (by frequency of data collection) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DATA COLLEC-TION METHODS & RISKS |
| **Value** | **Year** | **Year 1**  **(2015)** | | **Year 2**  **(2016)** | | **Year 3**  **(2017)** | | **Year 4**  **(2018)** | | **Year**  **5** (2019) | | **Year**  **6** (2020) | | FINAL | |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | **Planned** | **Actual** | **Planned** | **Actual** | **Planned** | **Actual** | **Planned** | **Actual** | **Planned** | Actual | Planned | Actual | Planned | Actual |  |
| **Output 1**  **Development planning for 45 bordering communities conducted** | ***1.1*** *Number of Integrated community development plans* | *Community development plans*  *Project reports* | 0 | 2014 | *8* | *8* | 12 | 12 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 10 | *7* | *7* | *0* |  | *45* | *45* |  |
| **Output 2**  **Community sustainability activities on agriculture and agro processing implemented** | *2.1 Number of new CBO’s* | *CBO registration documentation Project report* | 0 | 2014 | *1* | *0* | 3 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | *1* | *2* | *0* |  | *8* | *9* |  |
| *2.2 Number of new job opportunities* | *Project report* | *0* | *2014* | *0* | *0* | *80* | *64* | *200* | *200* | *220* | *300* | *100* | *80* | *30* |  | *564* | *644* |  |
| *2.3 Number of training courses* | *Project report* | *0* | *2014* | *0* | *0* | *1* | *0* | *2* | *0* | *3* | *0* | *6* | *3* | *3* |  | *6* | *6* |  |
| *2.4 Number of people trained* | *Registration lists* | *0* | *2014* | *0* | *0* | *40* | *25* | *150* | *0* | *120* | *78* | *50* | *90* | *90* |  | *60* | *193* |  |
| *2.5 Volumes of products flown through collection centers* | *The financial documentation of the collection center*  *Project report* | *0* | *2014* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *1000* | *0* | *100* | *15* | 10 | 15 | 10 |  | *1000* | *30* |  |
| **Output 3**  **Community sustainability activities on energy efficiency/ sustainable water management/ infrastructure rehabilitation implemented** | *3.1 Number of community infrastructure rehabilitated* | *Construction handover acts*  *Project report* | *0* | *2014* | *0* | *0* | *4* | *1* | *6* | *6* | *5* | *6* | *8* | *8* | *5* |  | *10* | *21* |  |
| *3.2 Water saving technologies introduced on 50 ha of land* | *Project reports* | *0* | *2014* | *0* | *0* | *5* | *0* | *10* | *15* | *35* | *35* | *21.4* | *17.1* | *0* |  | *50* | *67.1* |  |
| *3.3 Number of population benefitting from access to safe drinking water and other infrastructures* | *Handover acts*  *Project report* | *0* | *2014* | *0* | *0* | *4000* | *2350* | *6000* | *6000* | *5000* | *5000* | *5000* | *5000* | *6700* |  | *25000* | *18350[[16]](#footnote-16)* |  |

1. FGD - for discussing specific topics of interest. The group of participants is guided by the moderator/ facilitator who introduced topics for discussion and helped the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst themselves. During the discussions, it is discovered the group thinks about an issue, about the range of opinion and ideas, and the inconsistencies and variation that exists in a particular community in terms of beliefs and their experiences and practices. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The evaluation will follow the guidance on the integration of gender equality and human rights principles in the evaluation focus and process as estab­lished in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Handbook, Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation - Towards UNEG Guidance. The evaluation will follow UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN system and abide by UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct and any other relevant ethical codes. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. AgriConcept (CARD), Armenian Relief Society, Eurasian Center for Food Security of Moscow State University, Found for Armenia Relief, France Chapter of “Hayastan” All-Armenian Fund, International Committee of the Red Cross, Scientific Center of Vegetable and Industrial Crops, Social and Industrial Food Service Institute, World Food Programme, relevant local and national government bodies and ministries. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Azatamut, Aknaghbyur, Aygedzor, Aygehovit, Aygepar, Achajur, Artsvaberd, Berd, Berdavan, Berkaber, Deghdzavan, Dovegh, Debedavan, Itsakar, Lusahovit, Khashtarak, Koghb, Mosesgegh, Navur, Nerkin Karmiraghbyur, Nerkin Tsakhkavan, Noyemberyan, Norashen, Voskevan, Voskepar, Choratan, Chinari, Paravakar, Ptghavan, Varagavan, Verin Karmiraghbyur, Verin Tsakhkavan, Tavush, and (Tovuz). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Aygedzor, Aygehovit, Achajur, Berd, Mosesgegh, Choratan, Chinari, Nerkin Karmiraghbyur, Verin Karmiraghbyur, and Tavush. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Aknaghbyur, Aygedzor, Bagratashen, Ditavan, and Vazashen. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Baghanis, Berkaber, Ditavan, and Vazashen. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Voskevan, Bagratashen, Ptghavan, Aygehovit, Aknaghbyur, Baghanis, and Ditavan. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Khashtarak-Lusahovit, Sarigyugh-Nerkin Tsakhkavan, and Tavush-Chinchin. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Aygedzor, Aygepar, Berkaber, Dovegh, Jujevan, Kirants, Koti, Koghb, Nerkin Tsakhkavan, and Voskevan. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Deghdzavan, Paravakar, Mosesgegh, Artsvaberd, Khashtarak, Choratan, Koti, Aygedzor, and Koghb. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ditavan, Baghanis, Bagratashen, Voskevan, Ptghavan, Aygehovit, and Aknaghbyur. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. For detailed information refer to the UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results (pages 168-170): <http://www.undp.org/evaluation/handbook>.); [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. UNDP publishes its project information (indicators, baselines, targets and results) to meet the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards. Make sure that indicators are S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound), provide accurate baselines and targets underpinned by reliable evidence and data, and avoid acronyms so that external audience clearly understands the results of the project. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. It is recommended that projects use output indicators from the Strategic Plan IRRF, as relevant, in addition to project-specific results indicators. Indicators should be disaggregated by sex or for other targeted groups where relevant. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The reason that this value is lower than the target is that all interventions were strongly based on assessment of local needs and assessing the impact and the criticality of interventions. The targets were set 5 years ago during Project design and the initial year of implementation. The situation on the ground during the Project implementation has been continuously changing and some issues that have been identified several years ago, have been addressed by other development organizations of state interventions. It is logical that some results may not be identical with targets. The 18350 value is also due to some of the Project Risks that were realized during the implementation, namely, the change of security situation in Tavush, the armed conflict in Berd region, the political change in the country. These all resulted in some temporary limitations of movement for project staff and experts, limited population movement, and additional resources provided from the Government and other international and local organizations to address some pressing need of the local communities. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)