

Final Evaluation of the UN Joint Programme “Alliances for Culture Tourism in Eastern Anatolia”



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Acronyms and Terms

Acronym	Term
CH	Cultural Heritage
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
JP	Joint Programme
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goals Fund
MoCT	Ministry of Culture and Tourism
MoE	Ministry of Education
MTE	Midterm Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NSC	National Steering Committee
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PM	Programme Manager
PMC	Programme Management Committee
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistant Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNJP	United Nations Joint Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
UoA	University of Ankara

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Premises, context, objectives and methodology

1. This final evaluation is summative in nature and seeks to determine the extent to which the UNJP has implemented its activities, delivered intended outputs and attained outcomes, to update and complement the previous evaluation report. It also aims to generate substantive knowledge on the MDG-F thematic window of Culture and Development by identifying best practices and lessons learned that could be useful to other development interventions at national and international level.
2. The methodology used in this evaluation was discussed and agreed with the UNJP, based on the original terms of reference (ToRs). Time constraints required us to build this final evaluation process on the methodology, findings and data collected during the MTE. Consequently, a rapid version of the methodology applied in the MTE was decided to be the best and most efficient option.
3. The final evaluation was conducted over March and April 2012, including a brief field mission to Ankara from March 27th-29th.

Description of the development intervention

4. The Joint Programme (JP) *“Alliances for Culture Tourism in Eastern Anatolia”* The JP was formulated as a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The main national partner was the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT). Programme coordination arrangements included a management team in Ankara and a site team in Kars to facilitate the overall coordination of JP activities with partners at all levels, including preparation, implementation, monitoring and reporting. Governance of the programme was overseen by a National Steering Committee (NSC) and a Programme Management Committee (PMC), the main venue for coordination and participation of a broad range of stakeholders.
5. With a total budget of US\$ 3.8 million the Joint Programme started in 5 March 2009 and is expected to end on May 31st, 2012 with the organization of a closing event in Kars.
6. The JP design rests on the assumption that collaborative efforts in the field of cultural tourism between national and local authorities, civil society and the private sector in Eastern Anatolia and Kars will provide the basis for increased entrepreneurship and job creation, actively contributing to social cohesion, equality and poverty reduction in the area. Through the development of the cultural, winter and nature tourism sector and local capacities the UNJP directly aims to contribute to reducing income disparities between people of Kars and the rest of the country. Additionally, by focusing on tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and thus recognizing pluralism and cultural diversity, the JP contributes to social cohesion.

FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

Results

Contribution to the JP goals

Awareness on cultural heritage and cultural tourism increased

7. Despite initial delays and weaknesses in its original design (revised and adapted to the emerging needs and priorities during the inception period), the joint programme can legitimately claim a fair record of achievements and a significant contribution to the development of a favourable environment for cultural tourism development in Kars.
8. Particularly evident is the programme's contribution to raise local (and national) awareness of cultural heritage in Kars as a driving factor for economic growth and development. This is found to be fully aligned with the spirit and rationale of the thematic window's objectives and can therefore be considered a satisfactory contribution. Some early signs of the potential impacts of this awareness are starting to emerge (illustrative examples are provided in the evaluation report).
9. Most informants also agree that by increasing cultural awareness, the JP had substantively contributed to community building and empowerment, including women. In this regard, the programme's efforts to mainstream gender and reach women are to be remarked.

Institutional and operating capacities strengthened and a policy framework for the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage and the development of cultural tourism in Kars enabled

10. The evaluator was able to verify that the programme has significantly developed national and local capacities in the sector of cultural heritage safeguarding and cultural, winter and nature tourism, and that significant linkages between local and national stakeholders have been created.
11. Although there is evidence that the JP has influenced a critical mass of individuals and government professionals through capacity development, insufficient monitoring and evaluation of those trainings does not allow further assessment of their quality and usefulness and requires the evaluator to mostly rely on the many testimonies gathered during the MTE and the interviews conducted during the FE field visit.
12. The Joint Programme has achieved significant results in this area and the foundations for a "model for strategic direction, prioritization and safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and cultural tourism delivery in Kars"¹ have been established.
13. A number of key policy and operational tools for developing cultural, winter and nature tourism in Kars have been provided:
 - a. A tourism strategy (Tourism Master Plan) for Kars has been developed and officially endorsed by the government;
 - b. A system for the digitization of tangible cultural heritage in Kars has been established and is fully operational.

¹ Project Document-Outcome 1.

- c. The final draft of the Ani Site Management Plan is expected to be ready at the end of April and will be submitted to the Management Board for its definitive approval during 2012.

Income generation activities created.

14. Although the JP approach was aimed at creating the conditions for the development of cultural tourism-based income generating activities in the mid and long term, the evaluation has found evidence that some economic activity around tourism products and services is gradually emerging in the area and that at least part of it can be (directly or indirectly) attributed to the Joint Programme's implementation.

Contribution to the “UN delivering as one” model of implementation

15. Despite the initial delays and the need for an extended timeframe, the Joint Programme has fully delivered the planned outputs and activities. Furthermore, the Joint Programme's particularly inclusive and participatory approach has resulted in a high level of efficiency and a strong interaction among the different outputs and components of the intervention, although this interrelation was found to be significantly weaker in the case of the UNICEF component. However, a number of linkages to integrate this components rationale and implementation were suggested by stakeholders met during this evaluation.
16. In general terms we verified that the UNJP team has succeeded in building a collaborative working environment and to multiply synergies during implementation. This good working atmosphere and high level of coordination was evident to external stakeholders who rarely referred to individual agencies when talking about the JP. Some of the conversations held suggest that this joint experience has opened the way for longer term engagement among the agencies in the future and that some joint initiatives are already in the pipeline.

Sustainability

17. The high level of ownership of the programme by governmental partners and the probability of further work in Kars of other UN programmes in the future make us think that many of the results achieved will be sustained and that a model for cultural tourism development can be made fully operational in the medium term, enhancing the prospects of development and poverty reduction in this area. However, the general feeling is that there is a need to build upon the programme's achievements and that the economic development of Kars will require further support and action by the national government and international actors. Capacity building at the local level is regarded as particularly key to sustain results and to realize the full potential of cultural tourism in this particularly deprived area.

Lessons learnt

18. Joint implementation improves the quality of outputs. A strong internal coherence in the programme's design and a particularly collaborative environment among implementing agencies encourages synergies and enhances efficiency and sustainability. However, time and timing are particularly crucial in joint interventions deserving a more careful attention.

19. Actively involving local and national stakeholders in the design of the programme is key in terms of relevance but also in terms of ownership and sustainability. Flexibility and responsiveness to changing demands and emerging needs was also frequently mentioned as a key to success.
20. Proactively linking local and national stakeholders was instrumental in promoting ownership and leveraging the sustainability of outputs.

Final Evaluation of the UN Joint Programme “Alliances for Culture Tourism in Eastern Anatolia”

Introduction

1. This report presents the findings of the final evaluation of the United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP) “Alliances for Culture Tourism in Eastern Anatolia”, one of 128 joint programming experiences supported by the Spanish funded MDG Achievement Fund. The programme is framed within the Culture and Development thematic window of the MDG-Fund and was launched in 2009 to contribute to poverty reduction through the mobilization of cultural heritage in the Kars province (with a population of 300,000). The aim of the programme was to safeguard tangible and intangible cultural heritage and develop capacities of communities and enterprises for income generation and job creation in the field of cultural tourism. Particular efforts were made to ensure full and equal participation of women in the JP activities and benefits.
2. The UNJP was funded by the MDG Achievement Fund, entrusted to the United Nations Development Programme by the Government of Spain, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey and UN Agencies such as UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization), UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund) and UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization). The UNJP links to the realization of MDG-1 (Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger) at a local level by addressing Turkey’s regional developmental disparities.
3. After the midterm evaluation (MTE), conducted between March and June 2011, this final report presents a rapid qualitative analysis and discussion of the JP, following a thorough and detailed review of strategic programme documentation and numerous informant interviews and group discussions. The primary aim is to determine the extent to which the UNJP has implemented its activities, delivered intended outputs and attained outcomes, to update and complement the previous evaluation report. It also aims to generate substantive knowledge on the MDG-F thematic window of Culture and Development by identifying best practices and lessons learned that could be useful to other development interventions at national and international level. Finally, the report attempts to identify areas for concern in the implementation of the programme and extract lessons learnt and suggestions on how such issues could be dealt with in future interventions. This evaluation was conducted over March and April 2012, including a field mission to Ankara from March 27th-29th.

Context, objectives and methodology

Objectives of the evaluation

4. This evaluation aims to provide insight into the operations and performance of the UNJP “Alliances for Culture Tourism in Eastern Anatolia”. It also seeks to respond to JP and MDG-F needs for knowledge that can contribute to future policy and policy initiatives. The main purpose

is to provide an independent in-depth assessment of programme results and outcomes against the planned results and the implementation modality of the MDG-F Culture for Development Joint Programme. This final evaluation complements the MTE carried out in 2011, updating the information on achievements and activities implemented since then.

Methodology applied

5. The methodology used in this evaluation was discussed and agreed with the UNJP and the MDG-F Secretariat, based on the original terms of reference (ToRs). Time constraints required us to build this final evaluation process on the methodology, findings and data collected during the MTE. Consequently, a rapid version of the methodology applied in the MTE was decided to be the best and most efficient option. Following an initial desk analysis of strategic project documents, progress reports and secondary sources, primary data was gathered through structured and semi-structured individual and group interviews with a total of 19 stakeholders from Government and civil society in Ankara. Interviews conducted and testimonies gathered during the MTE were also used to triangulate and support the findings and conclusions of this report.
6. Annex 1 provides a detailed evaluation matrix, linking evaluation issues and questions to the main units of analysis, sources of information and methods of data collection. Preliminary telephone consultations with staff helped to shape the scope of the evaluation. The original questions in the ToRs were combined with issues raised during the brief needs assessment and document review and included in the evaluation matrix. In answering the evaluation questions, the evaluator has drawn from the best available evidence across a range of sources.

Level of analysis: Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions

7. The object of analysis of this evaluation is the Joint Programme within the framework of a) the MDGs and the general aims of the thematic window for “culture and development” and b) the undergoing reform within the United Nations System. Critical to this evaluation process is to ensure that the final report is relevant to the end users. This final evaluation focuses on the actual performance of the JP, mainly on the outputs being delivered and the achievements. It assesses the efficacy and sustainability of these outputs.

Scope and limitations of the evaluation

8. After preliminary conversations with the JP core team, and taking into consideration the short time available for the evaluation process, it was agreed that the evaluation would comprehensively review the programme’s achievements, particularly those associated to activities that were ongoing during the MTE but could not be included in the evaluation report, and appraise the long-term sustainability of the JP. The scope of this evaluation does not include the design of the JP or the implementation and processes in place, aspects already covered by the MTE.

9. The most significant limitations to the current evaluation were:
 - a. The limited period of time available for the evaluation process: which was carried out within 29 consecutive days. This considerably limited the time available for the field mission (3 full working days) and excluded the possibility of travelling to Kars.
 - b. With the JP officially closing in April, the management (and governance) structure of the JP was no longer fully operational at the time of this evaluation. Only one person was formally linked to the programme and she left immediately after the field mission. This was a major challenge and in practice meant that the evaluator needed to rely on the availability and good will of former JP staff to gather information, set up the field visit agenda and translate during some of the meetings.
 - c. Most interviews and meetings were conducted in Turkish assisted by non-professional translators, often former or current staff of the JP. As such, this introduces a non-measurable degree of deviation that should be taken into account when considering findings.
 - d. Due to agenda problems, some of the initial interviews could not take place. In particular the evaluator was unable to secure meetings with the General Directorate of Promotion within the Ministry of Culture and Development, a key partner in the implementation of the JP.

Description of the intervention

Background

10. Despite Turkey's remarkable economic progress and advancement towards attaining the MDGs, regional and gender-based inequalities continue to constrain the attainment of the MDGs in the country's Eastern Anatolia region with less developed provinces in Turkey. Although Eastern Anatolia has significant potential in social, cultural and economic development, the Human Development Index of the region is far below the national average. Lack of infrastructure in the region inhibits social and economic growth. This region is home to highly valuable cultural assets unknown to the world. Therefore stimulation of these sectors has a very high chance of success in reducing poverty (UNDP-Turkey, 2006).
11. The UNJP has focused its efforts in the province of Kars, an area situated at the northern tip of the Eastern Anatolia region and that has an HDI value of 0.644 compared to the national average of 0.757. Poverty rates in Kars are estimated to be around 30 percent compared to 17 percent for national averages (Turkish Statistical Institute-Turk Stat, 2000, Income Distribution, Consumption & Poverty Rates)². Yet according to the UNDP-Turkey 2006, the region shows great economic potential in commercial and tourism sectors, which combined with the region's highly valuable cultural assets may be key for poverty reduction in the area. Opportunities also exist for diversification into nature tourism and ecotourism as well as increased winter tourism.
12. The primary beneficiaries of the UNJP have been local citizens and entrepreneurs of Kars involved in cultural tourism or related sectors. Local and national institutions were also targeted,

² Lorenz Curve Figures: Disparities in share of income between quintiles of income brackets: lowest 20%: receives 5 percent; highest 20%: receives 55 % of total income (UNDAF 2.1.2)

since the JP aimed to develop institutional capacity for safeguarding and management of cultural heritage (tangible and intangible).

13. The JP was formulated as a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The main national partner was the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT). Programme coordination arrangements included a management team in Ankara and a site team in Kars to facilitate the overall coordination of JP activities with partners at all levels, including preparation, implementation, monitoring and reporting. Governance of the programme was overseen by a National Steering Committee (NSC) and a Programme Management Committee (PMC), the main venue for coordination and participation of a broad range of stakeholders.
14. With a total budget of US\$ 3.8 million the Joint Programme started in 5 March 2009 and is expected to end on May 31st, 2012.

The purpose

15. The Joint Programme is centred on UNDAF Outcome 2.1 (2006-2010), which promotes social and economic policies for poverty and disparity reduction and quality basic social services reaching vulnerable groups. It is aligned with national strategies and policies, including the Ninth Development Plan (2007-2013), the Government’s Tourism and Strategy Action Plan of 2007-2013 and the 2023 Tourism Strategy. It is structured in three mutually-supportive outcomes:

1. **A model for strategic direction, prioritisation and safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and cultural tourism delivery in Turkey’s less developed regions produced and implemented in Kars.** This outcome focused on the development of institutional and professional capacities and creating an enabling policy framework for cultural heritage protection and community-based cultural tourism in Kars.
 - Output 1.1³: Policy for the protection and enhancement of cultural assets in Kars presented for adoption by national authorities. (Implementing partners – UNESCO with MoCT)
 - Output 1.2: Site and tourism management planning and implementation capacities of local and national managers of cultural assets in Eastern Anatolia, particularly World Heritage Sites, developed (Implementing partners – UNESCO with MoCT)
 - Output 1.3: A cultural tourism: strategy and action plan agreed to by national authorities within the context of the “Brand City” Programme and the Tourism Strategy 2023. (Implementing partners – UNWTO with MoCT)
2. **Capacities of communities and enterprises increased for income generation and job creation in the culture based tourism.** This outcome concentrates on increasing local

³ These outputs have been taken from the final logframe matrix included in the JP Inception Report

capacities for income generation activities in the tourism sector and has facilitated the establishment of key partnerships

- Output 2.1: Capacities of existing enterprises strengthened and community initiatives started (Implementing partners – UNWTO with MoCT)
- Output 2.2: Systems for enterprise support and development established in line with applicable EU regional development and competitiveness strategies (Implementing partners – UNDP with MoCT)

3. **Capacities of local authorities and civil society in promoting social cohesion and dialogue through fostering pluralism.** This outcome deals with raising awareness of the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage among locals, including children.

- Output 3.1: Capacities of local authorities, civil society and youth on the role of culture in building identity, social cohesion and dialogue built (Implementing partners – UNESCO with MoCT , Municipality of Kars and Kafkas University)
- Output 3.2: Local participatory governance structures enhanced to promote and manage social cohesion programmes through fostering of pluralism (Implementing partners – UNDP with Governorate of Kars and Municipality of Kars)
- Output 3.3: Children's Understanding of Cultural Diversity and ability to resolve conflict increased through the provision of cultural and life skills based education programmes within the Child Rights Committees of Istanbul, Ankara, Eskisehir, Kayseri, Sivas, Erzincan, Erzurum and Kars. (Implementing partners – UNICEF with Provincial Child Rights Committees, Ministry of Family and Social Policies and University of Ankara)

Implicit Theory of Change

“Culture and development has a critical role in assisting efforts to generate inclusive growth as well as for human rights, democracy, and peace-building, all of which are essential for achieving the MDGs by 2015”⁴

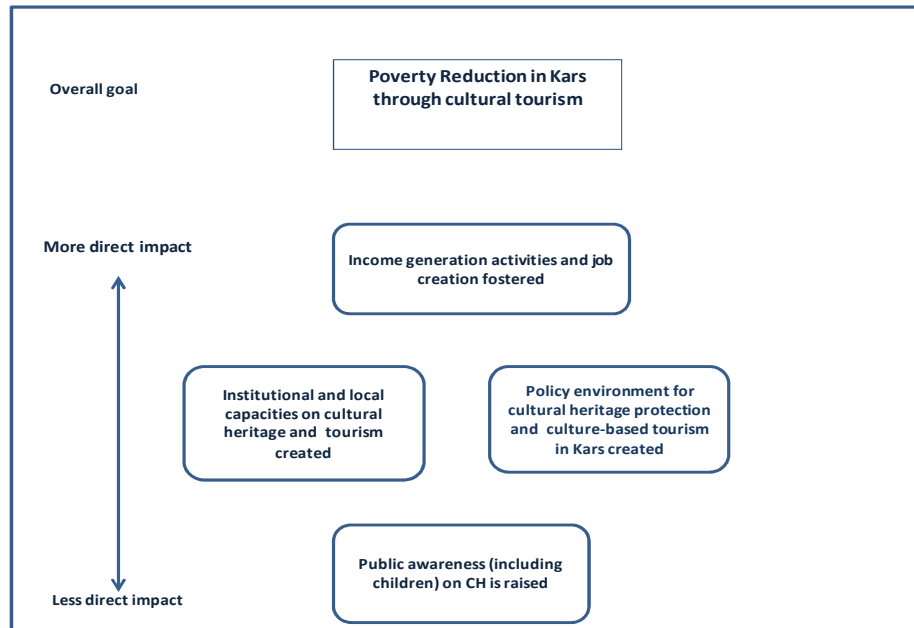
16. The JP design rests on the assumption that collaborative efforts in the field of cultural tourism between national and local authorities, civil society and the private sector in Eastern Anatolia and Kars will provide the basis for increased entrepreneurship and job creation, actively contributing to social cohesion, equality and poverty reduction in the area. Through the development of the cultural tourism sector and local capacities the UNJP directly aims to contribute to reducing income disparities between people of Kars and the rest of the country. Additionally, by focusing on tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and thus recognizing pluralism and cultural diversity, the JP contributes to social cohesion.

“Tourism helps to bring peoples together ... and to raise awareness of the value of the cultural heritage of peoples in their diversity, while promoting respect for different cultures and constituting a factor for tolerance”

Recommendation (2003)¹ of the Council of Europe (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 January 2003 at the 824th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

⁴ MDG-F Thematic Window Terms of Reference – Culture and Development

17. The following Theory of Change is based on the work done during the MTE process with the information and views collected from the UNJP core team. It does not directly relate to the outcomes and outputs as reflected in the JP documents but it reflects the interpretation of the implicit logic model underpinning the JP by the evaluation team. It will be used to guide the assessment of results and achievements.



FINDINGS, REMARKS AND LESSONS LEARNT

Results

18. **Overall finding:** Despite initial delays and weaknesses in its original design (revised and adapted to the emerging needs and priorities during the inception period), the joint programme can legitimately claim a fair record of achievements and a significant contribution to the development of a favourable environment for cultural tourism development in Kars. Particularly evident is the programme’s contribution to raise local (and national) awareness of cultural heritage in Kars as a driving factor that can ultimately facilitate economic growth and development, as well as to the development of institutional and professional capacities for the safeguarding of cultural heritage intended as a necessary condition to ensure the sustainable development of cultural tourism. Some early impacts of this increased awareness and self-confidence could be verified. Furthermore, the evaluator was able to verify that the programme has significantly developed national and local capacities in the sector of cultural tourism and that significant linkages between local and national stakeholders have been created.

Status of outputs and activities since the MTE

19. Although this final evaluation does not intend to cover implementation issues this section provides a brief overview of progress on the different outcomes since the MTE. It also makes some comments on the expected impacts. It does not pretend to be a detailed narrative of achievements and only major results or activities are singled out. We acknowledge that many of the implemented activities will not be reflected. Interviews and reports showed that 100% of the planned activities had been completed and some extra activities had also been delivered.

Outcome 1: A model for strategic direction, prioritisation and safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and cultural tourism delivery in Turkey's less developed regions produced and implemented in Kars.

Installation of a digitization system was completed and further training was provided to local staff of the MoCT in Kars. There are ongoing discussions about the possibility of integrating other MoCT programmes into the system with the remaining funds. The Ani site management plan was prepared through a participatory approach and is being finalised; according to government officials, it will be submitted to the Management Board for approval in April. A visit to Kars was jointly organised by UNDP and UNWTO for more than 20 people from the international and national tourism sector (tour operators, specialized media, professional associations etc). A promotional website for Kars, not originally planned, will be launched during the closure event.

Outcome 2: Capacities of communities and enterprises increased for income generation job creation in the culture based tourism.

A Sustainable Tourism Conference was organised in January 2012, involving local (Development Agencies, municipalities, NGOs, private sector representatives and tourism associations)⁵ and national stakeholders and international experts in a broad discussion about alternative forward-looking models and experiences for sustainable tourism. This event was not included as an activity in the project documents. Local capacities on tourism have been further developed through a number of training activities, including one-to-one business advisory services. The results of the intangible cultural heritage mapping activity was published, the Culture house officially opened and the Kars Minstrels festival (first with the support of UNESCO then locally organised and funded) celebrated. Some instruments and books were acquired for the Culture House at the request of local stakeholders (activity not planned).

Outcome 3: Capacities of local authorities and civil society in promoting social cohesion and dialogue through fostering pluralism.

⁵ The conference was frequently mentioned during the evaluator's interaction with stakeholders as a key event that had helped them to increase their awareness and knowledge on alternative models of tourism development.

Training modules in Museum Education⁶ were developed, published and distributed by UNICEF through Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Family and Social Policies (former SHCEK) and the University of Ankara (UoA), whose staff informed that the modules are being downloaded by a number of primary school teachers in the country and that other people are showing interest. This activity is planned to be evaluated next year. The friendship train activity was conducted gaining significant media attention and the government is planning to replicate the idea in the near future with a boat trip in the Black Sea. Children’s Museum Rooms in Kars and Erzurum are operational and receiving visitors and peer trainings were delivered and extended to other cities beyond the programme⁷. As a result of the JP the government is planning to open a children’s museum in Ankara.

A set of complementary and mutually reinforcing measures have been implemented to reinforce the safeguarding and viability of the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in the target area, intended as a pillar of cultural diversity. Activities included the establishment of a culture house for the local minstrels, the mapping of the ICH in the province of Kars, the support to the implementation of the national inventorying of ICH, the production of books, audio CDs and festivals on local ICH practices, as well as different training and educational activities.

20. Taking into account both these latter activities and those assessed in the MTE, it can be concluded that the JP was highly effective. The fact that the Ministry of Culture and Development assumed part of the implementation and covered the salaries of trainers for some of the JP activities allowed extra funds which have been used to organise some new activities.

21. Despite this result and as reflected in the MTE, a too generic design of activities and a particularly slow start has had a significant impact on the overall timeframe for the implementation of the programme which subsequently needed to request three extensions. This raises an issue about the need for realistic planning and design of programmes in general, and joint programmes in particular. But regarding the latter, it is also about the need to carefully weigh up the time needed to build trust relationships, coordinate and reach consensus among different agencies and an inclusive mix of national and local stakeholders.

Delivery rate March 2012

	Total budget Approved	Total Amount Transferred	Total Budget Committed	Total Budget Disbursed	Delivery rate (committed)	Delivery rate (disbursed)
UNDP	\$ 1.697.450,00	\$1.697.450,00	\$1.637.000,00	\$ 1.621.478,00	96%	96%
UNESCO	\$ 830.320,00	\$ 830.320,00	\$ 766.210,00	\$ 689.595,00	92%	83%
UNICEF	\$ 670.890,00	\$ 670.890,00	\$ 670.000,00	\$ 670.000,00	100%	100%
UNWTO	\$ 601.340,00	\$ 601.340,00	\$ 596.000,00	\$ 582.414,00	99%	97%
TOTAL	\$ 3.800.000,00	\$3.800.000,00	\$3.669.210,00	\$ 3.563.487,00	97%	94%

⁶ The whole programme included the production of five different books: Museum Training Peer trainer Module; Museum Training Activity Book; Museum Training Kars Book; Museum Training Erzurum Book; Museum Training Adult Trainer Module

⁷ Although the University of Ankara’s agreement with the JP was to deliver about four trainings, an extra number of trainings were reported during this evaluation. The University has voluntarily conducted and funded this extra activities.

22. The financial table above presents the delivery rates at the time of this evaluation, showing a very small percentage of budget pending delivery. This is mostly attributable to the organisation of the closure event due for May 8th. The costs of that event will be co-funded by all four implementing agencies. Other minor amounts are still pending disbursement (website development) but there are no signs of concern in this regard.

Contribution to JP goals

23. This section assesses to what extent the Program has yielded the expected results and may have contributed to the objectives and goals of the thematic window “Culture and Development”. In order to better understand the JP’s contribution to the outcomes and longer term social changes this section will be structured according to the main goals and objectives identified in the JP’s theory of change.

Awareness raising

24. The evaluator noted a particularly strong consensus on the most significant achievement of the Joint Programme: greater awareness of the value of cultural heritage as a potential asset for tourism development and economic growth in Kars.
25. The vast majority of stakeholders shared that the programme had significantly contributed to the systematic building of knowledge and awareness of the importance of cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) as both a past and future asset of the country, particularly among local stakeholders. This is fully aligned with the spirit and rationale of the thematic window’s objectives and can therefore be considered a satisfactory contribution.
26. Some early signs of the potential impacts of this awareness are starting to emerge. A Minstrels Festival in Kars was locally organised and funded (with MoCT contribution) in September, suggesting a reasonable degree of ownership and a strong consciousness of the value of this tradition to attract tourism. According to the last follow up visit from the JP, local beneficiaries seem to be more aware of the need to increase their capacity and professionalism regarding the development of their tourism products. Some local capacity building activities beyond the JP have been reported. The MoCT has decided to include Ani in the country’s tentative list to be submitted to UNESCO for inscription on the World Heritage List. According to government officials this decision was taken at the request of local stakeholders, hinting at an increased self-confidence in the local community. Furthermore, the evaluator learned from the MoCT informants that a cultural exchange project between the Universities of Florida, Izmir and Armenia is planned to take place in Kars soon. The project plans to bring around 40 students to the province of Kars, accommodating them in bed and breakfasts⁸.

⁸ It is expected that some of these bed and breakfasts will be selected among the ones that have received training under the JP

27. Intrinsically linked with the awareness raising, most informants agree that the JP had promoted community building and empowerment. During the MTE process the evaluators gathered numerous testimonies that confirmed the pride and hope that this JP seemed to have brought to stakeholders in Kars. This can mostly be attributed to the participatory and inclusive approach used and nurtured during implementation, which was crucial both to give a voice to the local cultural sector (even if at times that meant endless meetings) and to promote ownership.

“Local stakeholders were also part of the decision making process. We attended numerous meetings and witnessed the excitement of local stakeholders. Their participation was very powerful. We could see they were more knowledgeable about their cultural heritage. They felt empowered.”

Informant from the national government

28. Empowerment of women was at the core of JP action. The programme has made a significant effort to mainstream gender and reach women. Although it was not something proactively asked, gender issues and the importance of including women in the activities and benefits of the JP, kept on emerging during interviews with institutional stakeholders. This suggests that, even if not an explicit objective, the JP can legitimately claim some contribution to raising awareness and increasing understanding of the importance of gender equality among both national and local officials.

29. The high level of inclusiveness of the JP and its direct targeting of women is particularly in line with the thematic window’s objective of promoting the participation and protection of the rights of groups excluded on cultural grounds. As we argue, the participatory implementation of this joint intervention, the awareness raised and the high quality of gender mainstreaming are factors that have decisively contributed to enable a conducive local environment for social and political participation and for the inclusion and equal opportunities of both women and men in this particular development process and may constitute a good basis for a stronger civic engagement in Kars in the future.

Development of capacities

30. The concept of capacity building is broad. It is a continuous process that entails the development of human resources, institutions and an enabling environment for this. As such, capacity building was at the centre of the JP design and most of the activities conducted by all four agencies aimed to strengthen existing capacities at national and local level while providing practical tools and an enabling policy environment for cultural tourism management in Kars.

31. In total approximately 43 trainings were conducted in areas such as tangible and intangible cultural heritage, site management, project management; children’s rights and peer museum education, cluster methodology or marketing and promotion of local products, among many others. Trainings included traditional learning modules and practical and experiential learning such as study tours or one-on-one counselling and have been delivered both by experts provided by the different UN agencies and regular staff from the MoCT. The JP estimates that, as a whole around 630 people were trained, although many of the trainees have probably attended more

than one course. However, and as it was already found in the MTE, a scattered M&E system and the lack of a fully centralised qualitative monitoring of these activities, requires us to look at these numbers with caution⁹.

32. A key element of the approach taken by the JP has been to integrate and make use of the expertise and existing capacities of the MoCT. Officials from the Research & Training department have been in charge of delivering some training sessions and the Ministry has fully covered tuition expenses. This has not only reinforced the ownership of the JP by national institutions but, in the words of one interviewee, “has allowed the Ministry to test their own capacities and resources in this particular field”.

33. Institutional capacities enhanced: Interviews conducted with stakeholders from central government show that the programme has successfully contributed to the strengthening of institutional capacities in the development of cultural tourism and the safeguarding of cultural heritage both at local and national level. Several examples were recurrently mentioned during these conversations:

- The development of the Ani site management plan was the first experience of its kind within the MoCT and was unanimously celebrated by the officials interviewed. To date, the policy at the Ministry was to outsource this kind of planning exercise, this JP being a unique opportunity to tap into the Ministry’s own capacities and develop a specific methodology. Although the site plan has not yet been officially approved, sources from the MoCT assured that it will be endorsed by the management board during 2012. However, we were told that the draft of this plan has already been instrumental in the MoCT’s decision to include Ani in Turkey’s tentative list to UNESCO, which may be considered an unexpected outcome of this programme.
- The JP was also unanimously praised for catalysing an unusual example of cross-collaboration among different departments within the MoCT. During both the MTE and this evaluation we were able to observe that the information flow and coordination between the departments in charge of different outputs was substantive and significant. This is probably due to the extraordinarily high internal coherence of the JP design in its culture and tourism component which has resulted in significant synergy among the JP outputs and actions. Many stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation mentioned this cross-department collaboration as a key achievement in terms of institutional capacity-building.
- From a wider perspective, the Conference on Sustainable Tourism, although not originally planned, has been instrumental in consolidating and expanding the country’s understanding of alternative models of sustainable tourism development. Various informants mentioned the fact that official discourse included for the first time significant references to sustainable tourism, and that some degree of attribution to this JP could be safely inferred¹⁰.

⁹ The JP management team estimates that between 25-40 people may have received multiple trainings. In general a maximum of 300 people may have been trained in each programme.

¹⁰ In a recent speech, Mr. Ertuğrul Günay, Minister of Culture and Tourism, directly referred to the Culture Tourism in Eastern Anatolia UNJP, emphasizing the sustainable tourism approach brought through by the UNJP and its contribution to the understanding and importance of community based tourism in Turkey..

- Members of the University of Ankara felt that their participation in the project had contributed to increasing the government's capacities and awareness on the importance of museum education¹¹. After the JP the UoA has become the focal point for museum education in the country.
- At local level, some of the methodologies introduced (clusters) and the strategic tools provided, such as the tourism strategy (Tourism Master Plan), are serving to shape the Development Agency grant schemes and are being used as a reference to elaborate and develop tourism plans for other provinces.

34. Community capacities for cultural tourism created: led by UNDP and its community-based approach, the JP has initiated a process of community articulation of the cultural sector around the touristic potentials of its cultural heritage. This means that a lot of effort has been devoted to build relationships between the private and cultural sectors at the local level. But also, and maybe most importantly, significant linkages and bridges have been created between local and national stakeholders.

35. At local level, according to many the clusters workshops and the grant scheme have established the embryo of a collaborative culture among the private sector that was previously weak or nonexistent. The grant scheme requested applicants to work in partnership, and according to the latest reports and testimonies of members of the UNJP management team, some of them continue to do so. For instance it was reported that KARSOD, the association of hotel owners in Kars, has been implementing some marketing and branding trainings together with Kamer, an association of women producing felt products, a project funded by the MoCT provincial directorate. Finally, the association is also collaborating with students from Kafkas University to organise traditional dance performances in restaurants and hotels in the city, something that was considered rare before the JP by some stakeholders. These are just some of the examples given.

36. Another important side effect of this JP that was repeatedly mentioned by both national stakeholders and implementing agencies is the bridge built between Kars and national government officials. Although Kars was already part of the Brand City Programme when the JP was launched, government officials met for this evaluation believed that through this programme, the province has attracted further attention from central government¹². Most remarkably, they also felt that the project had provided them with a unique opportunity to learn how to work with local stakeholders (beneficiaries, NGOs, media etc.), making them more aware of the gaps and contradictions of the regulatory frameworks in practice.

37. In the other direction, informants mentioned the fact that the JP has contributed to increased local knowledge and understanding of the distribution of roles and responsibilities among the different institutions with a stake in the cultural tourism sector. On the other hand, one might

¹¹ According to these sources about 16 projects presented to the EC for funding by Turkish museums, now include a museum education component and have asked the UoA for assistance. This information, however, could not be properly verified and triangulated. Direct attribution of this effect to the JP must therefore, be taken with caution.

¹² According to government officials, for example, the implementation of the JP had been instrumental to accelerate investment on certain basic infrastructures around Ani such as the building of the water sanitation system in the village of Ocakli.

expect that the capacity building and active involvement in the implementation of the joint programme of SERKA, a recently established development agency, will indirectly add to the structural reforms and decentralisation process going on in the country.

38. Individual capacities for cultural tourism product development created: a training needs assessment carried out by UNWTO guided the design and supply of training courses at local level. It is estimated that around 25 to 40 local stakeholders have received multiple trainings to strengthen their entrepreneur capacities or the development of cultural tourism products under the UNDP grant scheme. In general, although no information on the quality and usefulness of the training is available¹³, documents reviewed and stakeholders testimonies during the MTE indicate that the quality of trainings was satisfactory to most and that the knowledge gained has contributed to the development of their business or production model. In this regard the Development Agency confirmed that a significant number of applications from Kars were received in the current round of their grant schemes. Other stakeholders from the management team confirmed that beneficiaries are also submitting their business development projects to other donors (a private insurance company with a corporate responsibility programme; a grant program from Ministry for development). However, some of the testimonies gathered suggest that individual capacities at local level still need to be further developed and that the capacity gaps compared to national stakeholders are still considerable.
39. Overall, although there is some evidence that the JP has influenced a critical mass of individuals and government professionals through capacity development, the unavailability of monitoring and evaluation reports of those trainings does not allow further assessment of their quality and usefulness and requires the evaluator to mostly rely on the many testimonies gathered during the MTE and the interviews conducted during the FE field visit.

A policy framework for the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage and the development of cultural tourism in Kars enabled

40. The Joint Programme has achieved significant results in this area and the foundations for a “model for strategic direction, prioritization and safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and cultural tourism delivery in Kars”¹⁴ have been established.
41. Under the leadership and expertise of the two non-resident agencies, UNESCO and UNWTO, the basic policy tools for developing cultural tourism in Kars have been provided:
- A tourism strategy (Tourism Master Plan) in line with national priorities and objectives was developed and officially endorsed by the government; a number of promotional tools such as a logo and a slogan for Kars, several brochures and a tourist website are ready or about to be. Although not very clear on paper, it seems that the leadership of the implementation of

¹³ The evaluator was informed that an M&E department has been recently created in the MoCT. Unfortunately, they were unable to provide statistical or qualitative information on the trainings delivered during this JP.

¹⁴ Project Document-Outcome 1.

the Master Plan may remain largely at the regional and local level, which makes SERKA, the Development Agency, a key actor for future sustainability.

- A system for the digitization of cultural heritage in Kars was designed and established, and is now fully operational. The system is highly valued and owned by national stakeholders in the MoCT who, at the time of this evaluation, were discussing the feasibility of expanding the system to world heritage site departments within the ministry¹⁵.
- Finally, the process leading to the approval of the Ani Site Management Plan is reported to be in its final stages. The final draft of the plan is expected to be ready at the end of April and will be submitted to the Management Board for its definitive approval later this year. The plan compiles agreed policies, local stakeholders' suggestions, definitions, precise roles and responsibilities to excavate, restore, manage and protect the ancient site of Ani in the vicinity of Kars. The plan does not include a financial annex and, according to government officials, it has been left to the competent institutions to implement it and take action. However, budget lines for this plan have been included in the national budget since 2011, which indicates enough political will and financial capacity to take this plan forward in the future.
- A set of seven leaflets were prepared in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, to raise public awareness on the legislative and normative framework for the safeguarding of cultural heritage in Turkey. Targeting stakeholders at a national level, the leaflets contain detailed information on museums and historical works, contribution to the conservation of immovable cultural assets, excavations, aids for the restoration of cultural assets, application procedures, what should be done when historical artefacts are found and sponsorship and incentives provided by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for the safeguarding of cultural assets. Having been entirely and successfully distributed after the first edition, the brochures have been updated, reprinted and further distributed through museums and culture and tourism directorates of 81 provinces in Turkey.
- Two workshops were held at local and regional levels in order to raise awareness of the concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage and to facilitate the preparation of the official inventory – involving relevant institutions and stakeholders from the Eastern Anatolian Provinces (Ağrı, Ardahan, Bingöl, Bitlis, Elazığ, Erzincan, Erzurum, Hakkari, Iğdır, Kars, Malatya, Muş, Tunceli and Van). The making of inventories is one of the priorities for the implementation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, ratified by Turkey in 2006. With the ratification of the Convention, existing folk culture studies have gained a new perspective in Turkey and these studies will be understood and shared by all relevant partners and stakeholders. To this end, in addition to the organisation of the workshops, a booklet was also produced (revised and reprinted in 2011) on the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, including the Turkish text of the Convention and the Operational Directives for its implementation. The activity was carried out in close co-operation with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, General Directorate of Research and Training.

¹⁵ Although the plan was to use the remaining funds for this purpose the Ministry was considering the allocation of additional funds if necessary.

Income generation activities created and development of Kars promoted

42. As reflected in the Theory of Change, and although the JP approach was aimed at creating the conditions for the development of cultural tourism-based income generating activities in the mid and long term, the creation of income generation opportunities and job creation in Kars was the final goal of this JP. Cultural tourism is developed as a means to create growth and reduce income disparities with other parts of the country. Apart from the grant scheme initiative no other activity or output of the JP was conceived to directly impact on the economic growth and development of this Eastern Anatolia province. It is therefore implicit that the goal was mostly conceived as a longer term objective requiring the contribution of many. JP's efforts rather focussed on creating the necessary conditions for sustainably developing cultural tourism in the target area. This makes us extremely cautious in attributing results to this particular intervention at this stage.
- “Locals knew that Kars has to develop, they just didn't know how”
43. The project documents include a set of key indicators to test progress and measure potential socio-economic impacts of the JP. These include the record of arrivals, the number of overnights registered annually in Kars, the number of tour operators featuring Kars heritage and the number of economic enterprises (businesses and unions of business actors) benefiting from the growth of the culture and tourism sectors. However, systematic collection of data in this regard has been challenging and heavily dependent on the existence and availability of official statistics. In consequence, and although the JP documents provides some baseline data (number of arrivals and overnights), the progress reports fail to systematically reflect reliable information on those metrics and they cannot be used in this report. A careful analysis and realistic selection of quality indicators would be highly recommended in future interventions.
44. The lack of rigorous quantitative data led the evaluator to ask stakeholders to try and join the dots between the activities that had been conducted through the JP and the final economic impact in Kars. We got a variety of qualitative replies and concrete examples that are presented as a reference:
- Government officials explained that the Ani site management plan, once approved, will include some actions concerning the training of local communities in archaeological excavation. The idea is to be able to employ them in the future.
 - Initiatives supported by the grant scheme were frequently mentioned as having the potential to bring development and economic growth to Kars: the acquisition of machinery for vacuum packing of goose products by the goose-breeding project, for instance, is allegedly allowing women breeders to export their goods to other parts of the country, increasing their economic gains; the production and sale of felt souvenirs and dolls in Karstore (one of the projects supported by the JP) was also mentioned as an income generating activity. Finally, there is a widespread perception that the JP has created a favourable environment for the opening of the Cheese Museum, new restaurants and cafés,

all of them important assets that bring a more vibrant and dynamic social life to Kars, enhancing the city's tourist appeal.

- The familiarization tours organised through the project (Study Tour to Spain and Familiarization tour to Kars) were also considered to have the potential to increase the interest of national and international tour operators in the area and eventually bring growth and development. Although no evidence of this could be gathered, it was claimed that some of those tour operators had already shown interest, publicised their visit to Kars on their website and some of them had included Kars in their itineraries. Closely related, the participation of local hotels from Kars and Sarikamis in national and international tourism fairs is expected to attract more visitors to the city;
- A government official firmly believed that the JP had directly contributed to raise the interest of locals in the establishment of bed and breakfast establishments. According to this source the number of information requests to their department in this regard has significantly increased since this programme.
- The museum training modules developed by UNICEF with the technical support of the University of Ankara include a specific module on Kars and are being distributed all across the country. Stakeholders believe that this will serve as a promotional tool that will eventually increase the number of tourists visiting Kars.

Contribution to “UN delivering as one”

45. Although this evaluation is not focusing on process issues the experience of joint implementation frequently emerged during the interviews with key staff of the JP who unanimously mentioned it as one of their most valuable areas of learning. Overall, coordination and joint implementation of the JP has found to be very good.

46. Joint implementation: The JP “Alliances for Culture in Eastern Anatolia” involved a cross section of resident (UNDP and UNICEF) and non resident agencies (UNESCO and UNWTO), a qualitative partnership aiming to bring together their different areas of expertise and working cultures, while also geographically challenging. A site team¹⁶ was established in Kars as a focal point for coordination and network building, requiring frequent visits from the management team and a strict discipline of regular coordination meetings.

“Having two non-resident agencies in the team was not always easy. We had to engage in countless discussions about different issues. It was not easy but it helped us to always be critical and look for the best option”

47. In general terms we verified that the UNJP team has succeeded in building a collaborative working environment and to multiply synergies during implementation. This good working atmosphere and high level of coordination was evident to external stakeholders who rarely referred to individual agencies when talking about the JP.

¹⁶ The site team in Kars was mainly composed by a local coordinator and a tourism focal point, appointed by UNWTO in the last year of implementation

48. Leadership and coordination: In the eyes of many, one of the key factors behind this collaboration was the ability of the programme manager to facilitate the flow of information and coordination of activities among agencies. The leadership and commitment of UNDP to make all partners, including non resident agencies, part of a team was also particularly appreciated¹⁷. The Study Tour to Spain, the tour to Kars and the promotional website for Kars were good examples of coordination among UNDP and UNWTO, who jointly funded and organised those activities. Some of the conversations held suggest that this joint experience has opened the way for longer term engagement among the agencies in the future and that some joint initiatives are already in the pipeline.
49. Internal coherence of the JP design and implementation was particularly striking in the case of the components led by UNDP, UNESCO and UNWTO whose activities and outputs have consistently built upon each other in a remarkably coherent way. This could also be verified, though to a lesser extent, in the case of UNICEF where evident efforts were made during implementation to establish linkages with other JP components. As reported in the MTE, apart from activities related to the Children’s Museum Rooms, the particularities of the design of this component made its contribution to the common theory of change less clear and more focused on the long term. However, and despite this limitation most stakeholders agreed that it had the potential to contribute to the overall aim of the JP in this longer term. Furthermore, some stakeholders believed that this component had actually resulted relatively useful to strengthen the visibility and outreach of the rest of activities under the JP.
50. Some examples illustrate how this strong coordination and sense of unity has produced significant synergies in the outputs. The intangible cultural heritage map, the Tourism Master Plan and the Ani Site Management plan are good examples of this: the Intangible Cultural Heritage map conducted under UNESCO leadership was instrumental for the development of the Tourism Master Plan (UNWTO) and significantly contributed to shape the contents of the training modules developed by UNICEF and the University of Ankara. In turn, the Tourism Master Plan was a reference used in the preparation of the Ani Site Management plan, according to government officials.
51. Time and timing: As already mentioned in this report and analysed in the MTE, the JP had a very slow start. Designed to be implemented in two years, initial delays and an overambitious work plan advised the management team to ask for three consecutive extensions¹⁸. Most informants from the UN system agree that joint experiences need longer time for the circulation of documents, reaching consensus and, in general, for decision-making. This suggests the need to take time and timing more carefully into account in future joint interventions.

¹⁷ Both UNWTO and UNESCO were invited to participate in the new UN strategy in Turkey

¹⁸ The JP Document was signed 13 November 2008. The first 6 months extension covered the period January-June 2011 and the second the period July-December 2011. Finally a last extension has covered the period January-April 2012.

52. Flexibility was also repeatedly identified as one of the key factors in the implementation of this joint programme. The JP has demonstrated an extraordinary elasticity and flexibility to adapt to emerging needs. This was not only recognised by the implementing agencies but particularly acknowledged and valued by national stakeholders, who unanimously praised the responsiveness of the management team to their demands and priorities.

Sustainability

Overall finding: The potential for the long-term sustainability of the project achievements varies at the local and national level. Whereas the JP has succeeded in building solid working relations with government counterparts in the tourism sector at national level, there is a question mark concerning the sustainability of the project results at local level due to the higher volatility of the political environment. However, the creation of operational and policy tools as well as the development of professional and institutional capacities should be considered as very important elements in ensuring the future sustainability of the JP's results. Yet, further effort from the national government and international institutions may be required to realise the full potential of the social, economic and regulatory processes launched by the Joint Programme.

Ownership of outputs and results

53. At national level, in-depth interviews carried out during this evaluation confirmed significant ownership, particularly by government officials, which suggests good prospects for sustainability. Some key aspects that sustain this particularly high level of ownership are the responsiveness and alignment of the JP to local needs and the political priorities of the national government and the proactive engagement of national counterparts in the implementation of the JP. As a result the evaluator found evidence that at least some of the outputs have strong potential to outlive the JP. A significant example of this is illustrated by present conversations within the MoCT to integrate other world heritage ministerial programmes within the digitization system provided through the JP.

54. At local level, documents reviewed and testimonies from the JP management team suggest that the strategy to involve local stakeholders and beneficiaries in the implementation of the programme has helped to foster local identities and local pride that may itself sustain the incipient social and economic processes promoted by the JP. However, interviews with different stakeholders, and testimonies gathered during the MTE, also make clear that ownership is sometimes volatile due to political changes.

Capacities

55. Creating meaningful organizational and institutional change takes a long time and has many associated risks but is, however, a key aspect for sustainability. As we have already described, developing and creating new capacities in national and local stakeholders was at the core of the JP design and can be considered one of its main areas of success. The JP's approach of building on and maximizing existing capacities at national level while supporting new knowledge and

capacity at local and individual levels seems to have been particularly appropriate to deliver sustainable results.

56. At national level stakeholders believe that the country is now better positioned to implement alternative and community-based models of sustainable tourism development. At local level the capacity building efforts have particularly targeted individuals from the cultural and private sectors. However, some institutional capacity has also been created to guarantee the running of the digitization system at the local level and to involve local authorities such as the development agency and local communities or the civil society at large. In this regard the evaluator could verify that some of the methodologies proposed were already being implemented by SERKA in the development of strategic plans for other provinces. Although no field visit to Kars was conducted for the evaluation, telephone conversations with the Development agency suggest that sustainability of institutional capacity at local level ranks as high.
57. In terms of individual capacities, there are reasons to believe that results will be sustained¹⁹ but there is also some concern that the harnessing of local talent may be at risk if local capacities are not further enhanced and supported by responsible institutions at national and local levels.

Political and financial support

58. Sustainable development usually needs to be nurtured by strong political will. In-depth interviews and conversations with government officials show a remarkably firm and explicit political commitment to develop and sustain most of the outputs of this programme and to take further action in the future. Although the insufficient strategic involvement of key partners such as the Ministry of National Education or the local government, raised some concern in terms of sustainability, key contacts and negotiations with those partners were ongoing at the time of the evaluation. Most governmental sources showed confident that there will be no obstacles to the implementation of the Tourism Master Plan and the Ani Site management plan.
59. Funding, however, remains an overarching issue adversely influencing sustainability of the Tourism Master Plan. Although the document includes an economic estimate for its implementation it was not made clear where those funds need to come from or how they are going to be raised. On the other hand, we found strong signs for the sustainability of the Ani site management plan with funding earmarked in the MoCT budget since 2011, even if it is still pending official approval.
60. In other cases, sustainability may be compromised by deficiencies in the design of certain activities. That was the case for example of the Tourism Governance Organization, a structure actively promoted by UNWTO, but that requires further regulatory efforts from the national government to be formally constituted and operational. However, despite the “failure” of the programme to formally create such a governance structure, it was widely considered that the

¹⁹ Responsible officials from the development agency confirmed that this institution had received a significant number of applications from Kars which may be partly attributed to the capacities gained after this JP. Testimonies from the JP management team also indicate that beneficiaries are applying their acquired knowledge to implement new activities and to apply to new sources of funding.

process has made a decisive contribution to the establishment of a rich net of actors at local level that may function as the embryo of such a participatory strategic structure in the future.

61. Some of the identified weaknesses in the initial design of the project also raise concern for sustainability. In fact, during the inception period the original project document and work-plan have been successfully revised and adapted to the emerging needs/priorities, through a participatory approach and extensive consultations with all partners and stakeholders, and with the full support of the JP's steering bodies. As the MTE concluded, one of the JP's strengths has been an extremely inclusive design and participatory implementation. Despite the fact that a lot of the effort of this programme was geared to the establishment of substantive linkages and partnerships, in some cases the selection of partners was perceived by several informants as having been more organic and opportunistic than strategically designed to ensure sustainability. For instance the University of Ankara was not initially involved as a key partner but did finally become one during implementation. Other interviewees believed that local authorities should have been more substantively involved as implementing partners and not just beneficiaries. However, decentralization processes in the country are still in a very early stage of development and may limit the margin for action in this regard.
62. Particularly significant in this regard is the absence of the Ministry of Education in the partnership structure of the programme, which could compromise the sustainability of the UNICEF component. Still, at the time of this evaluation there were ongoing conversations between the MoE, the MoCT and the University of Ankara aim to include the training modules developed by the former (with the support of UNICEF) in the national curricula, which may significantly enhance the prospects of sustainability in this regard.
63. In general terms, and despite these concerns, the chance of sustainability of the JP ranks reasonably high.

Conclusions and lessons learnt

Main conclusions

64. Overall we conclude that, despite the initial delays and the need for an extended timeframe, the Joint Programme has fully delivered the planned outputs and activities. Furthermore, the Joint Programme's particularly inclusive and participatory approach has resulted in a high level of efficiency and a strong interaction among the different outputs and components of the intervention, although this interrelation was found to be significantly weaker in the case of the UNICEF component. However, a number of linkages to integrate this components rationale and implementation were suggested by stakeholders met during this evaluation.
65. A conducive and collaborative working environment among implementing agencies seems to have been key to coordinate action and to promote synergies among the different components of the Programme.

66. In terms of results the unanimous perception is that the JP has made a significant contribution to raising the awareness of local and national stakeholders on the potential and value of Kars' cultural heritage. In line with the spirit and rationale of the Culture and Development thematic window, this awareness and the capacities built are expected to be pillars to sustain the development of sustainable cultural tourism in the future. The evaluation has found some evidence that, in fact, some economic activity around tourism products and services is gradually emerging in the area and that at least part of it can be (directly or indirectly) attributed to the Joint Programme's implementation. It has also verified that institutional and operating capacities have been created, both at national and local levels.
67. The issue of gender and empowerment of women frequently emerged during conversations with stakeholders. This suggests that the constant attention that the JP has devoted to gender mainstreaming throughout the life cycle of the programme has successfully contributed to including women as key beneficiaries of the programme's achievements and in general, to raise awareness on the importance of gender mainstreaming.
68. Finally, significant ownership shown by government officials and local stakeholders (both at local and national levels) of a number of JP outputs demonstrate a reasonable commitment and interest by national institutions and is a positive sign for the sustainability of the main outputs of the programme. This report provides some good examples of emerging trends and impacts as a result of the JP's implementation. However, the general feeling is that there is a need to build upon the programme's achievements and that the economic development of Kars will require further support and action by the national government and international actors. Capacity building at the local level is regarded as particularly key to sustain results and to realize the full potential of cultural tourism in this particularly deprived area.

Lessons learnt

69. Joint implementation improves the quality of outputs. A strong internal coherence in the programme's design and a particularly collaborative environment among implementing agencies encourages synergies and enhances efficiency and sustainability.
70. Time and timing are particularly important when designing and planning joint interventions. Formulation and design needs to carefully weigh the time needed for implementation, decision making and coordination.
71. Actively involving local and national stakeholders in the design of the programme is key in terms of relevance but also in terms of ownership and sustainability. The inception phase of this JP was a good opportunity to learn that and to clarify goals and expectations. At the same time flexibility and responsiveness to changing demands and emerging needs was also frequently mentioned as a key to success. Many informants highly valued this programme for being particularly attentive to their institutional priorities and pace.

72. Participation of key local and national stakeholders in the implementation of the programme was key to foster ownership and underpin sustainability of results. Furthermore, it is widely perceived that proactively linking local and national stakeholders was also instrumental in this regard. The ability of the UNJP management team to transform some of its main weaknesses (an overambitious design of activities and a particularly slow start) into a highly participatory and collaborative working environment must be highlighted.