

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
Turkmenistan**



**Outcome Evaluation of Democratic Governance Portfolio Within
UNDP/Turkmenistan Country Programme 2010 – 2015**

Report

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The evaluator hopes that this evaluation and its recommendations will further strengthen UNDP contribution to advancing democratic governance objectives in Turkmenistan.

The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the UNDP Turkmenistan. The evaluation team remains solely responsible for any errors that may remain in this report.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	
CCA	UN Common Country Assessment
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CO	Country Office
CAT	Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CERD	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPED	Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRMW	Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEX	Direct Execution Modality
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NEX	National Execution Modality
NIDHR	National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAR	Public Administration Reform
TOR	Terms of Reference
RBM	Results Based Management
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Turkmenistan advanced in some areas of democratic governance over the last 7 years. Since assuming office, the President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov has initiated a number of reforms. More democratic institutions were set up, multiparty elections were held, and better practices in local politics were instituted.

The organizations measuring democratic governance internationally such as Freedom House and the World Bank do not view these changes as substantial to affect the overall democracy scores of Turkmenistan. This outcome evaluation has been commissioned by UNDP Turkmenistan to assess the collective performance of five years of Democratic Governance (DG) portfolio in 2010-2014. The evaluation objectively evaluates the contribution of the DG Portfolio projects to the achievement of the relevant 2010-2015 UNDAF and CPAP Outcomes through assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions of the DG Portfolio.

A mixed-method design was used for this evaluation to ensure triangulation of the information collected. Desk review of relevant projects' documentation, consultations with UNDP management and staff, semi-structured interviewees with projects' managers and staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries were conducted.

UNDAF Outcome 1 states "By 2015, rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan are respected and guaranteed in accordance with international human rights standards as well as principles of democracy and the rule of law" and the corresponding CPAP Outcome 1.1 is "Government authorities establish and implement mechanisms to protect and promote rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan" and CPAP Outcome 1.2 "The Government integrates principles of good governance and rule of law into national policies, legislation and decision-making."

In the area of human rights, UNDP DG portfolio focused on supporting the national partners with accessing international good practices, knowledge, skills and resources, capacity strengthening and human resource development across a range of sectors and supporting the Government's adoption, ratification and implementation of human rights treaty obligations, as well as greater exposure to human rights norms and values. There was a measurable improvement of appropriate human rights mechanisms in Turkmenistan. On the one hand, UNDP strengthened the Government of Turkmenistan's capacity to comply with its international human rights commitments and standards. On the other hand, UNDP improved the knowledge and capacity of rights holders to claim their rights. UNDP played a major role in strengthening the capacity of Government to report on progress against various international human rights commitments. UNDP also worked with Parliament to support harmonization of national legislation with the international commitments with regard to the implementation of UN Human Rights Conventions.

UNDP supported Turkmenistan to undergo the UPR process and the Government accepted the overwhelming majority of UPR recommendations. A draft National Human Rights Action Plan was developed. The government officials developed the necessary skills to report to and work with the UN Treaty bodies. Some national legislation was revised to align it with country's international treaty obligations.

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The most fundamental outcome level change made by UNDP is a systemic change in attitudes of the public and decision makers to human rights. “Human rights” was a taboo for a long time and have never been used in official statements and during the current UNDAF cycle HR became frequently mentioned in speeches of country leadership, incorporated into the national legislation, programs and policies.

In the area of parliament development, UNDP made some contribution to achieving Outcome 1 of UNDAF and CPAP. In Turkmenistan, the Executive Presidency tends to overshadow the other branches of the government including the Parliament, thus undermining the practice of separation of powers in a democracy. UNDP enhanced the parliamentary processes and procedures to improve the quality of legislation and improve professional capacities of MPs. In particular, MPs discussed recommendations of the UPR and agreed to implement them in national legislation as well as strengthened their capacity in developing local socio-economic development plans.

In the area of electoral system and processes, UNDP was extensively supporting the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda in Turkmenistan by enhancing national capacities of electoral observers, building the operational capacity of regional election commissions, exposing the CEC officials to international experience through study visits, as well as introducing ICT processes to daily operations of the CEC. The electoral Turkmenistan's legislation was reviewed and recommendations were provided to harmonize it with the best international practices.

In the area of public administration, UNDP contributions helped to build efficient, responsive, transparent and accountable public administration. UNDP interventions focused predominantly at supporting the institutional development of the Academy for Civil Service of Turkmenistan, including its structure and mandate and curriculum development. A wide range of training and other capacity building measures were implemented. The Academy has devised the long term action plan aimed at turning the Academy into the leading knowledge-based agency providing high quality civil servants' training, devised a list of international experts, including institutions in public administration and upgraded its curricula.

UNDAF Outcome 2 states “By 2015, human resources developed to achieve sustained socioeconomic development” and corresponding CPAP Outcome 2.1 “The government ensures comprehensive socio-economic integration of all vulnerable groups including women, disabled and HIV+ persons.”

In the area of social protection system development, UNDP supported the introduction of the Notional Defined Contribution Pension System and establishment of the Pension Fund of Turkmenistan. The system provides extensive coverage of the working-age population. In addition, UNDP strengthened capacity of public servants in policy making and administration of the new social security system.

In the area of advancing social and economic integration of persons with disabilities (PWDs), UNDP strengthened the capacity of Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan (DBST) in addressing the needs of deaf and blind people, provided advice on potential actions to be taken to align the national the national legislation with the UNCRPD, promoted employment opportunities for PWDs and implemented a range of activities to increase public awareness on social and economic inclusion of PWDs.

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UNDP is implementing a project “Social Inclusion through Leadership Skills for Disabled Women in Turkmenistan” that will be completed in 2015. The overall objective of the project is to promote engagement of women with disabilities into development policy making.

UNDAF Outcome 3 states “By 2015, the system of environmentally sustainable economic management expands people’s opportunities to participate in social and economic development, especially in rural areas” and corresponding CPAP Outcome 3.1: “Men and women of all social groups effectively contribute to the country’s development policy and implementation processes to achieve inclusive growth and social equality.”

Support to Accounting System Modernization project supported modernization of accounting and auditing in Turkmenistan to achieve improved accountability through the proper use of modernized accounting and audit standards and practices. The International Financial Reporting Standards in banking sector were successfully introduced and institutionalized.

In the area of Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Development, UNDP focused on advocacy, capacity building of key stakeholders in the Government of Turkmenistan and the private sector. Government and private sector representatives in Turkmenistan increased their knowledge and obtained direct exposure to international best practices in market reforms. Targeted training of women entrepreneurs was implemented.

In all three areas of UNDAF Turkmenistan has made partial positive progress, supported by UNDP’s positive contribution. Turkmenistan’s political realities played a major role in determining opportunities for UNDP engagement and affected projects’ outcomes. Often the political will and commitment to implement comprehensive reforms were lacking that restricted the number of areas for deeper UNDP engagement and limited their potential impact.

UNDP DG portfolio support was relevant to Turkmenistan National Programme 2030 agenda and governance priorities as articulated in various government development programmes. UNDP’s projects were closely aligned with the national development agenda and responsive to stakeholders’ needs. UNDP DG portfolio was also relevant to such core UNDP corporate goals as enabling major governance processes that include constitutional reform and democratic electoral processes, promotion of economic, political, social, civil and cultural rights, strengthening of legislatures and effective governance to bring greater development benefits to citizens and increase their confidence and trust in public institutions. Relevance of all DG portfolio projects was strongly confirmed through the interviews and consultations with key Government and funding partners for each project of the portfolio.

Overall, UNDP DG portfolio was effective in producing results at the aggregate level in alignment to UNDAF and CPAP. Although more extensive project-level evaluations are needed to provide rich evidence, the available evidence demonstrates that some projects were more effective than others. Long-term contributions of UNDP interventions to CPAP outcomes can be found in development of new legislation; capacity development at an institutional level; and capacity development at an individual level. The individuals interviewed highly evaluated the effectiveness of UNDP interventions.

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The DG portfolio includes very diverse projects and it is difficult to assess the overall portfolio efficiency as extensive evidence at the project level has to be collected. DG portfolio management arrangements have largely worked well and have been uniformly praised by partners and project managers for their efficiency and effectiveness. The interviewees expressed their understanding of complex and often lengthy UNDP procurement procedures and confirmed that UNDP was always doing all its best to speed up the process to meet the partners' needs.

Many of DG portfolio projects implemented some sustainability enhancing strategies such as promoting institutional changes and developing effective exit strategies, but sustainability was not always a core concern area in projects' designs. In addition, political factors play a key role in determining sustainability of many interventions.

Turkmenistan has ratified the UN Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. The national legislation recognizes equality of rights of women and men and put solid institutional and legal foundations for gender equality. No gender restrictions in access to any level of education or the labour market exist. In its current portfolio UNDP has only one project "Social Inclusion through Leadership Skills for Disabled Women in Turkmenistan" specifically focusing on gender empowerment. The Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan on SMEs Development project had a specific gender empowerment component. Gender is mainstreamed across many DG portfolio projects. They, for instance, target equal participation of men and women in training and other events organized, and factor explicit gender issues into project design.

UNDP's partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective. The partnerships positively contributed to the achievement of the UNDAF/CPAP outcomes. Many national partners greatly appreciated responsiveness of UNDP and its ability to establish and maintain good working relations with national and international partners.

There is a strong perception in Turkmenistan that UNDP is a trusted and neutral partner because it functions outside bilateral relations and foreign aid policy. UNDP has considerable influence in the area of DG as evidenced by the fact that the organization has been invited to operate in politically sensitive areas such as human rights and capacity building of the Central Election Commission and the Mejlis.

DG reforms are by their nature complex and long-term. Some outcomes and impacts of UNDP DG portfolio, particularly in the areas of human rights, election systems and public administration can only be expected in the long term when other elements of the DG system will improve as well and a new democratic culture will prevail. Recognition of the long-term perspective is an important reality-check in the DG portfolio.

This evaluation observed variations in UNDP's DG portfolio contribution to UNDAF and CPAP resulting from a number of factors. One major factor was the political context and degree of national stakeholders' political will to pursue multiple DG reforms. Some other limitations include: overly ambitious UNDAF and CPAP outcomes and insufficient clarity in linking projects' inputs, outputs and outcomes to CPAP and UNDAF outcomes in projects documentation, inconsistent degree of focus on results across projects; and weak UNDP DG portfolio monitoring system.

The evaluation identifies a number of lessons learned:

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- The achievement of the UNDAF Outcomes is a joint responsibility of government, development partners, the public and, sometimes, the private sector, but without political will progress will be difficult and almost impossible in Turkmenistan.
- Advancement of DG principles and practices through new or revised legislation is important and necessary, but not sufficient to advance DG agenda as laws have to be implemented and rights-holders empowered. Law implementation is a complex and time-consuming process that requires continuous strong political will and commitment of multiple stakeholders as well as extensive capacity building of multiple government and non-government partners.
- Capacities of partners to advance the DG agenda should be continuously strengthened.
- Substantial ministry budgets make donors' help less attractive and the national partners are becoming more selective. UNDP has to maintain open line of communication and dialogue with all relevant partners to maintain old and develop new relations of trust and be able to quickly respond to any emerging needs. Maintaining such relations is critical as it takes a long time to build new ones.

UNDP DG portfolio makes the most significant contribution to achieving CPAP and UNDAF goals when its projects are:

- aligned with top Government priorities and supported by the Cabinet of Ministers, ministers and ministry staff;
- realistic and pragmatic in terms of technical feasibility and time required to successfully implement them;
- led by results-focused project managers with strong leadership competencies who establish and maintain trusting relationships with national project directors and diverse stakeholders groups;
- employ a project manager and/or staff who worked in the partner ministry/organization and know personally decision makers there;
- flexible and responsive to national partners' needs;
- strategic and address sustainability aspects from the beginning of the project;
- results-oriented on CPAP outcomes through all stages of the project cycle; and
- based on effective partnership strategies.

UNDP neutrality and approach of listening and responding to partners' needs and circumstances is highly valued by all partners. It is perceived to be ideologically neutral and, thus, devoid of the agendas that motivate other international development partners. Other UNDP strengths include:

- Well institutionalized relations with Mejlis, social sector ministries, Institute of Democracy and Human Rights under the President that create solid foundations to advance initiatives on HR, decentralization, public administration reforms, labour market and social services reforms.
- Significant corporate expertise in such areas as human rights, public administration reforms, social policies, gender rights, public administration reforms and civil society.
- Extensive expertise in designing upstream and downstream interventions promoting human rights.
- Ability to quickly mobilise high quality international expertise.
- Ability to work on sensitive areas where other international partners may not be welcomed.
- UNDP's solid management practices and effective and transparent procurement procedures that secured trust of both the Government and the donors for funds administration.
- Ability to build and promote effective partnerships with multiple international organizations, UN sister agencies and national partners.

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Although UNDP has numerous comparative advantages, there is a range of factors beyond UNDP control that can hamper the expansion of DG portfolio:

- A highly vertical state decision making model that dramatically reduces the incentives for ministries to innovate and initiate new projects.
- Lack or limited statistical information and unwillingness of authorities to share statistics to develop effective interventions and monitor their impact.
- Reduction of donors' resources available because a) effects of the global recession that pressure donors to cut their aid budgets; b) transition of Turkmenistan into the cohort of upper middle income economies (World Bank classification).
- Underdeveloped democratic institutions and practices and low public "demand" for improving DG.
- Donors are looking for possibilities to achieve more with less funding and may be willing to seek other partners.
- Government is becoming more open to collaboration on sensitive political issues with a wider range of international partners and traditional strong positions of UNDP in sensitive areas may be weakened (e.g., government collaboration on anti-corruption with OSCE).
- Difficulties to find true champions of reforms in ministries/agencies who would have sufficient authority and reputation to ensure successful projects implementation.
- Many donors prefer to deliver their programmes in cooperation with companies and organizations with headquarters in their countries.

The future country's DG development trajectory will depend on the leadership political will and commitment. Selection of reform priorities will be done by the top leadership and to a large extent these decisions will be based on the political leadership' calculations of potential effects of DG reforms on the existing leadership legitimacy and support.

True DG cannot be built only through institutional reforms. Improvement of formal state institutions and, what is more important, ensuring that the existing formal democratic institutions actually function require change in power relationships among actors. Strategically, the rights-holders have to be empowered to make the existing formal institutions work and minimize the extent and importance of informal decision making processes. A strong and broad coalition interested in and capable of supporting DG should be built.

In the next programme cycle UNDP should continue to focus on building systems, institutions, processes and mechanisms for promoting DG, gender equality and the rule of law in Turkmenistan. The clusters of interventions should be well aligned with and supportive of main top leadership commitments and be flexible enough to respond to arising needs and opportunities. Specific areas of support may include:

- Supporting Developing of National HR-based Vision and Strategy for Human Development. Democratic institutions, policies and empowerment of rights-holders do not confine themselves to technical capacity building and adopting HR legislation, but includes also creating a democratic space in which citizens can participate in country development. Turkmenistan needs a vision for the future and UNDP can use the National Human Development Report process to establish a platform for such societal discussions where the decision makers, academics, policy implementers, NGOs and members of public can share their views on future of the country. In developing a vision for future of Turkmenistan, the NHDR team may explore the role of democratic institutions and practices for sustainable human development.

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- Promoting HR among lawmakers. UNDP is well positioned to continue working on multiple areas of promoting HR agenda. The interventions focusing on HR should find a proper balance between capacity building of duty bearers and empowerment of rights-holders and create the enabling environment that promotes the articulation of common HR agenda. Many citizens are unaware of their rights and considerable effort towards sensitizing citizens should be a priority. It is necessary to promote and support institutionalization of human rights education in the national education curriculum to ensure that duty-bearers and rights-holders are fully equipped with the necessary HR knowledge. UNDP should advocate the need for the Parliament to monitor implementation of its core laws.
- Supporting Judicial branch. The implementation of HR framework is problematic if judicial system is weak and dependent on the executive branch. UNDP can explore this highly sensitive area, identify and implement a few capacity building projects as entry points into reforming the judicial system.
- Strengthening Public Administration to Support Laws and Policies Implementation. One of the biggest bottlenecks in advancing DG is weak capacities of the public administration and poor translation of the existing legislation into policies and programs and their implementation. UNDP can strengthen capacity of public administration by introducing core elements of the policy cycle with focus on use of data, development of policy options, implementation and monitoring in ministries and central agencies.
- Strengthening Civil Society. UNDP is perfectly positioned to collaborate with some CSOs and strengthen their capacities. The primary focus can be made on supporting well established CSOs in the areas of policy dialogue and mobilizing constituencies, encouraging ministries to engage CSOs into service delivery for some vulnerable groups and strengthening the role of local CSOs in community decisionmaking.
- Supporting reforms of the social sector. UNDP may collaborate with the social bloc ministries and relying on the existing statistics and internal administrative data identify social groups vulnerable to exclusion and specific barriers to inclusion they face. Substantial support can be provided to build the institutional and human capacities of the social bloc ministries in labour policies, standards, enforcement, and social service delivery. Social ministries organizational structures can be optimized, with particular focus on optimization of local offices of respective ministries and accountabilities, staff composition and competencies, work load per staff, services provided, etc.
- Promoting Gender Equality. UNDP may continue its work on mainstreaming and promoting HR agenda and using diverse advocacy and advisory tools to leverage broader support for, and commitment to, gender equality and women's empowerment. Potential key strategic domains of intervention for UNDP include gender-responsive budgeting and planning, gender equality opportunities, gender stereotypes and improving gender sensitivity – within both the government and the society. UNDP may support gender mainstreaming into public policy and legislation as well as educational system and may conduct public awareness campaigns on gender equality. It may be beneficial to implement cascade trainings of public servants at all levels, focus on practical aspects of their work and incorporate gender-related issues into the educational programmes for civil servants.

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- Supporting Decentralization. As UNDP has solid global and regional expertise in supporting decentralization and Local Plans development, it is well positioned to strengthen capacities of local authorities. It is advisable for UNDP to establish good working relations with all or some local authorities, conduct their needs assessment and implement some capacity building measures on a pilot basis to support potential piecemeal decentralization efforts.

Specific suggestions for UNDP consideration on how programme design, implementation and management can be further enhanced to address potential interventions include:

- Make UNDAF more realistic and identify priority areas for UNDP interventions. Some UNDAF outcomes were based on unrealistic expectations, with unclear measures of success. To make UNDAF more relevant, it can be annually reviewed to maintain its currency and reflect the progress towards its prescribed outcomes. If annual reviews are too cumbersome to undertake, a mid-term review can be conducted to identify and address implementation concerns and ensure UNDAF relevance.
- Establish umbrella advisory project with sufficient degree of flexibility that will quickly engage international expertise to address emerging Government needs. The decisions on expertise needed and specific parameters of the engagement will be made by the Government and UNDP senior decisionmakers.
- Identify and empower reforms champions. One of the key factors behind many DG portfolio projects' success were the "change agents" – individuals with significant experience in different government institutions who were trusted by decisionmakers and were able to convince them to pursue projects' goals. UNDP can identify these "change agents" in diverse ministries and agencies and focus on their capacity building. They could be trained in evidence-based policy making, modern approaches to public administration management, English, and leadership skills.
- Build on effective partnerships developed through the current CP cycle and create new ones. Good relations and trust among partners play more important role than evidence or analysis in decision making. UNDP is advised to focus on maintaining and establishing new networks built on trust among diverse groups of stakeholders in DG. Often the government partners do not realize the extent of problems they have to deal with nor possess the necessary knowledge to address them. It is advisable to engage them early on into Needs Assessments to determine the type of policy, intervention and services required. It will capture the nature, magnitude and distribution of a problem and the extent to which there is a need for an intervention (e.g., program, policy) to address it. Stakeholders may prioritize the issues to make the interventions better targeted and identify the role of UNDP. In addition to building partners' capacity and ownership, the engagement of partners from the early stages of project development may build long-term relations of trust between the national partners and UNDP.
- Explore and implement "UN as One" programming. Such realities of Turkmenistan as relatively small size of the country, small budgets of UN agencies, complementarities of UN sister agencies and some examples of effective collaboration create favourable conditions to pursue "UN as One" modality. UNDP can promote this model and work together with UN sister agencies to identify a common theme, develop a unified UN approach, clarify partners' roles

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and responsibilities and develop a few joint programs. One of potential areas is supporting the Government partners with the implementation of legislation that was adopted to support country's compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- Improve horizontal collaboration among UNDP projects. It is recommended that opportunities be sought for cross-sectoral programming, in light of the fact that development issues are becoming increasingly cross-sectoral in nature. The application of upstream and downstream approaches can be an effective mechanism to build and/or strengthen horizontal and vertical networks and links among UNDP projects and achieve sustainable impact at the national and local levels.
- Actively promote UNDP among donors and national partners. UNDP should continue promoting itself as a strong partner that can be trusted with implementation of a wide range of initiatives. UNDP projects' results and achievements should be more widely disseminated, including amongst the direct beneficiaries, so as to increase the level of national and local ownership and the sustainability of the projects' results. These activities will further enhance partners' trust and credibility of UNDP and will help in attracting funding. Some donors and national partners may be interested in UNDP operational capacity to effectively and transparently implement projects.
- Enhance M&E function in UNDP. Strengthening of M&E function in UNDP DG portfolio can enhance the quality of interventions by setting specific and measurable output, outcome and impact measures; improve efficiency of allocation of resources; and support regular and results-oriented reporting on the projects' progress and inform corrective actions, if necessary. It is advisable for the DG portfolio to have an internal system of outcome monitoring on the basis of the forthcoming UNDAF and CPAP. This system should provide enhanced measurable indicators of outcome and outputs achievement that should be monitored from the beginning of the projects. In addition to meeting UNDP accountability requirements, ongoing project monitoring is an effective measurement mechanism to assess projects' performance that reduces the need in independent evaluation.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 UNDP Democratic Portfolio Context

Turkmenistan's demonstrated significant achievements in the area of human development over the last 7 years that can be attributed mostly to its economic growth. Turkmenistan's Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2013 is 0.698— which is in the medium human development category—positioning the country at 103 out of 187 countries and territories. Between 2010 and 2013, Turkmenistan's HDI value increased from 0.687 to 0.698, an increase of 1.6 percent or an average annual increase of about 0.54 percent. Between 2010 and 2013, Turkmenistan's life expectancy at birth increased from 65 to 65.5 years and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita expressed in constant 2011 international dollars converted using purchasing power parity (PPP) rates increased from 9,563\$ to 11,533\$. Expected years of schooling and mean years of schooling remained unchanged over this period.¹

The World Bank classified Turkmenistan as an Upper Middle Income country. Its economy heavily relies on the hydrocarbon-led export.² Turkmenistan has enormous gas reserves, estimated at 13.4 trillion cubic meters (473.2 trillion cubic feet), and is generally ranked fourth globally, behind Russia, Iran, and Qatar.³

Turkmenistan advanced in some areas of democratic governance over the last 7 years as well. Since assuming office, the president Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov has initiated a number of reforms. More democratic institutions were set up, multiparty elections were held, and better practices in local politics were instituted. The country strengthened institutional respect for human rights and improved election practices. The country leadership is aware that more efforts have to be made to support the development of civil society, proceed with decentralization and improve effectiveness and efficiency of state institutions.

The organizations measuring democratic governance internationally do not view these changes as substantial to affect the overall scores of Turkmenistan. The Freedom House, for instance, recorded only a slightest improvement in Turkmenistan's democracy from 6.96 in 2007 to 6.93 in 2008-2013, where 7 is the lowest level of democratic progress (see Table 1 below).

¹ UNDP, Human Development Report 2014, Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience, Explanatory note on the 2014 Human Development Report composite indices Turkmenistan

² World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/country/turkmenistan>

³ Martha Brill Olcott, Ph.D. Turkmenistan: Real Energy Giant or Eternal Potential? James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, December 2013.

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Table 1. Nations in Transit Ratings and Averaged Scores

	2007	2008	2012	2013
Electoral Processes	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Civil Society	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Independent Media	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
National Democratic Governance	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Local Democratic Governance	7.00	6.75	6.75	6.75
Judicial Framework and Independence	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Corruption	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Democracy Score	6.96	6.93	6.93	6.93

Source: Freedom House, Nations in Transit Report

Note: The ratings reflect the consensus of Freedom House, its academic advisers, and the author(s) of this report. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the author(s). The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest level of democratic progress and 7 the lowest. The Democracy Score is an average of ratings for the categories tracked in a given year.

The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators dataset that captures six key dimensions of governance of Voice & Accountability, Political Stability and Lack of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption did not record significant changes in any or these areas for Turkmenistan between 1996 and 2012.⁴ Only some insignificant improvements were recorded in the area of government effectiveness from 2011 to 2012.

Do the global indicators adequately capture the progress of Turkmenistan in democratic governance? This outcome evaluation has been commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Turkmenistan to assess the collective performance of five years of Democratic Governance (DG) portfolio in 2010-2014 and focuses on its two pillars: **governance and human development** and provide more nuanced analysis of Turkmenistan's progress and UNDP's contributions.

UNDP in Turkmenistan promotes human development and supports the national development priorities. UNDP partners with the Government of Turkmenistan and other development organizations on a broad spectrum of issues related to democratic governance, environment and energy, and human development. UNDP, in particular, has been associated with efforts to promote human rights agenda, strengthen the Parliament of Turkmenistan, Central Election Commission and other state institutions and has provided both technical and financial support through various projects. More specifically, the Government of Turkmenistan partners with UNDP to improve the national capacity to report to the UN treaty bodies, promote and protect human rights, enhance the national electoral system and parliamentary processes and modernize public administration.

1.2 Objectives and projects of the DG portfolio

UNDP plans its work on the 5-year basis through Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP). The CPAP broadly defines the goals that the Government and UNDP jointly subscribe to and the financial parameters agreed upon. The current CPAP was informed by the UN Common Country

⁴ World Bank Institute, Worldwide Governance Indicators, Country Data Report for Turkmenistan, 1996-2012

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Assessment and was developed to support the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

The UNDAF provides a collective, coherent and integrated United Nations response to national needs and priorities. It was guided by the goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration, which has been endorsed by the Government, as well as by Presidential Reform Agenda, the National Programme “The Strategy of Economic, Political and Cultural Development of Turkmenistan Until 2020” and other key national priorities. The UNDAF translated these into a common operational framework for development activities upon which individual United Nations organizations formulated their actions for the period 2010-2015.

The evaluation objectively evaluates the contribution of the DG Portfolio projects to the achievement of the relevant 2010-2015 UNDAF and CPAP Outcomes through assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions of the DG Portfolio. The evaluation focuses specifically on the following UNDAF and respective CPAP outcomes:

Outcome 1

- UNDAF Outcome 1: By 2015, rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan are respected and guaranteed in accordance with international human rights standards as well as principles of democracy and the rule of law.
- CPAP Outcome 1.1 Government authorities establish and implement mechanisms to protect and promote rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan
- CPAP Outcome 1.2 The Government integrates principles of good governance and rule of law into national policies, legislation and decision-making

Outcome 2

- UNDAF Outcome 2: By 2015, human resources developed to achieve sustained socioeconomic development
- CPAP Outcome 2.1 The government ensures comprehensive socio-economic integration of all vulnerable groups including women, disabled and HIV+ persons

Outcome 3

- UNDAF Outcome 3: By 2015, the system of environmentally sustainable economic management expands people’s opportunities to participate in social and economic development, especially in rural areas
- CPAP Outcome 3.1: Men and women of all social groups effectively contribute to the country’s development policy and implementation processes to achieve inclusive growth and social equality

This evaluation is both retrospective and prospective. It identifies the contribution UNDP has made and the extent to which planned outcomes have been achieved. The evaluation focuses on selected 11 UNDP projects and looks at the DG Portfolio entirely (A detailed TOR for the evaluation exercise can be found in Annex 1). Table 2 presents the DG budget allocations by area, project and years of operation.

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Table 2. List of DG Projects and their Budgets

Project Title	Total Budget	Years of Operation
Outcome 1: Human Rights and Freedoms		
Strengthening National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights	\$3,040,013	2010-2011 (closed 2012)
Strengthening the National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights	\$94,268	2013 (closed 2014)
Enhancing Electoral System and Processes in Turkmenistan I	\$114,444	2010 (closed 2013)
Enhancing Electoral System and Processes in Turkmenistan II	\$453,136	2010-2014 (closed 2014)
Enhancing the system of civil service in Turkmenistan	\$216,155	2010-2011 (closed 2012)
Parliamentary Development Support Program	\$561,089	2010-2014 (closed 2014)
Outcome 2: Human Resources Development		
Support to Social Protection System Development	\$247,907	2010-2014
Advancing Social Inclusion and Integration of Persons with Disabilities	\$220,830	2012-2013 (closed 2014)
Social Inclusion through Leadership Skills for Disabled Women in Turkmenistan	\$242,553.00	2014-2015
Outcome 3: Sustainable Economic Management		
Support to Accounting System Modernization	\$149,399.00	2010-2011 (closed 2011)
Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan on Small and Medium Enterprises Development	\$96,850.00	2010-2011

The majority of UNDP DG portfolio projects are managed based on the requirements stipulated in the National Implementation Modality. National Implementation is an agreed arrangement between UNDP and the Programme Countries, whereby a national institution assumes overall responsibility and accountability for the formulation and effective execution of UNDP led donor funded technical cooperation programmes and projects. National implementation is used when there is adequate capacity in the national authorities to undertake the functions and activities of the programme or project. The execution of the projects requires that the national institution acting as “Implementing Partner” has the technical and administrative capacity to assume the responsibility for mobilizing and applying effectively the required inputs in order to reach the expected outputs. The implementation of the national execution modality is expected to contribute to build national capacities.

The evaluation objectively evaluates the contribution of the DG Portfolio projects to the achievement of the relevant 2010-2015 UNDAF and CPAP Outcomes through assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions used under the framework of the DG Portfolio. Five strategic areas were examined:

- Outcome status was assessed. The consultant examined where the outcomes have been achieved and, if not, whether there has been progress made towards their achievement. The

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challenges to attainment of the outcomes were identified and UNDP's strategies to address them, including innovative approaches, were explored.

- Underlying factors that were beyond UNDP's control that influenced the outcomes were examined. The consultant distinguished the substantive design issues from the key implementation and/or management capacities and issues.
- Strategic positioning of UNDP was analyzed in terms of communication that goes into articulating UNDP's relevance, or how the CO is positioned to meet partner needs by offering specific, tailored services to these partners, creating value by responding to partners' needs, mobilizing resources for the benefit of the country, not for UNDP, demonstrating a clear breakdown of tailored UNDP services and having comparative advantages relative to other development organizations in the democratic governance result area.
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of UNDP partnership strategy was analyzed. The partnerships were identified and the role of UNDP was analyzed. The focus was made in particular on assessing the partnerships' contribution to the achievement of the UNDAF and CPAP outcomes.
- Lessons learnt and best practices were identified as they pertain to management and implementation of activities to achieve related outcomes.

The result of this evaluation can provide baseline for the new country programme beyond 2015. The report also contains specific recommendations that hopefully will make a positive contribution to development of the next UNDAF/CPAP in terms of UNDP's contribution to DG and human development areas and help to identify focus, modality of implementation, resource allocation, partnerships and coordination among the relevant projects.

2. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This outcome evaluation assesses extent to which a DG portfolio contributes to and/or produces the intended improvements as they were outlined in the UNDAF and CPAP, with particular focus on policy and institutional changes. The consultant realizes that traditional project evaluation techniques that focus on determining the outcomes of a particular intervention through a causal pathway from inputs to outputs and then to outcomes are not sufficient for the DG portfolio outcome evaluation and should be complemented by approaches that capture changes in harder-to-measure areas such as institutions, policies, perceptions and attitudes.

A mixed-method design was used for this evaluation to ensure triangulation of the information collected. The evaluator is aware of Turkmenistan's specifics and challenges of obtaining the information necessary to assess the country's progress in the area of democratic governance. In addition to the lack of government statistics on the subject of the evaluation, it may be problematic to obtain independent assessments of country's progress. In addition, the standard measures of democratic governance (e.g., free and regular elections, independent and free press, democratic and responsive decision making process) would have to be adjusted to address Turkmenistan's specifics.

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The consultant conducted review of all the relevant UNDP documentation to identify specific projects' contributions to achieving the expected DG portfolio outcomes. The contextual and other factors beyond scope of UNDP influence that affected the UNDAF and CPAP outcomes were explored. The evidence of contribution of UNDP DG portfolio towards achieving relevant UNDAF and CPAP outcomes was documented at the aggregate level.

To verify preliminary findings, the consultant reviewed the donors and international organizations' publications and sought additional information from UNDP and projects' management and staff. A field mission to Turkmenistan validated the preliminary findings and observations through interviewees and collection of additional information. On the last day of the mission the consultant presented his preliminary findings and recommendations to UNDP management and staff to validate them and seek advice into the report development.

In line with UNDP's results-based management model, the main focus was made on outcomes that are actual or intended changes in development conditions that the DG projects were seeking to support. The following UNDP definition of outcomes was operationalized for this evaluation:

*"Outcomes describe the intended changes in development conditions that result from the interventions of governments and other stakeholders, including international development agencies such as UNDP. They are medium-term development results created through the delivery of outputs and the contributions of various partners and non-partners. Outcomes provide a clear vision of what has changed or will change globally or in a particular region, country or community within a period of time. They normally relate to changes in institutional performance or behaviour among individuals or groups. Outcomes cannot normally be achieved by only one agency and are not under the direct control of a project manager."*⁵

The evaluator is aware that institutional, policy and behavioural outcomes are complex and multi-layered. Outcomes are influenced by a complex range of factors and a number of partners. The evaluator tried to identify attribution for outcomes and examined a number of intervening factors, in addition to the DG projects' activities that may have contributed to the outcomes. Attribution is a determination to what extent DG projects rather than other external factors, have contributed to observed outcomes. Although the attribution is the ideal approach, in those cases where attribution could not be determined the evaluator had to resort to a contribution approach to outcome-level evaluation and sought to achieve a plausible association of DG portfolio inputs, outputs and outcomes.

The evaluation include six categories of analysis:

- a. Design and focus of the CPD/CPAP
- b. Status of the outcomes
- c. Factors affecting the outcomes
- d. UNDP contributions to the outcomes and effectiveness of the CPD/CPAP in terms of progress towards CPAP outcomes
- e. UNDP partnership strategy⁶
- f. Sustainability and gender mainstreaming of the outcomes

⁵ UNDP. 2009. *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*, p.56.

⁶ UNDP Evaluation Office. 2002. *Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators, Monitoring and Evaluation Companion Series 1*.

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A large set of different and complementary evidence was collected and analyzed by utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods that included:

- Desk review of relevant projects' documentation was conducted. The consultant analyzed the projects as interventions with cause and effect connections among inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact that should have contributed to achieving expected UNDAF/CPAP outcomes. Quantitative and qualitative information was collected and analyzed mostly to capture documented projects' outcomes. Some of the documents that were reviewed include such UN/UNDP Turkmenistan documents:
 - UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), 2010-2015;
 - UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP), 2010-2015;
 - Common Country Assessment, 2008;
 - UNDAF reports for 2010-2014;
 - UNDP Strategic Plan for 2014-2017; and
 - Projects' reports and other relevant documentation (a complete list of documentation reviewed can be found in Annex 8.4).
- Consultations with UNDP management were conducted to identify key informants for face-to-face interviews and e-mail exchanges and to validate the evaluation methodology, including the questionnaires. The evaluation was impartial and independent but the UNDP team was regularly updated on the evaluation progress (A questionnaire used can be found in Annex 8.2).
- Projects managers and staff, when available, were interviewed. The consultant explored main projects' outcomes, challenges encountered, strategies to address them and lessons learned. In addition to validation of the consultant's findings from the projects' documentation review, the interviews helped in exploring the DG projects' outcomes that have not be captured in projects' reports (A questionnaire used can be found in Annex 8.2).
- Semi-structured interviews of stakeholders and beneficiaries with pre-determined sets of questions were conducted. The interviews elicited information on UNDP DG portfolio supports to assess their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Specific questions can be found Annex 8.2.
- Presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations was made to UNDP management and staff. It validated preliminary findings and allowed open and frank discussions of DG portfolio outcomes and potential areas of intervention for the next programming cycle.

Quality Control

The evaluator is committed to providing quality products and services. As a deliverable is being developed, the evaluator had at least four check points:

- A discussion of the inception report and plans of action to ensure that the evaluator's understanding of what is required corresponds to UNDP expectations.
- Presentation and discussion of preliminary findings and recommendations.
- A review of a draft, or mid-point of evaluation.
- An acceptance procedure for completed report.

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Adjustments were made to reflect feedback at each of these points. This process ensured that multiple opportunities were provided to resolve issues and challenges throughout the evaluation exercise.

The following questions were addressed through the evaluation:

Relevance

- The relevance and adequacy of UNDP outputs to the outcomes.
- Extent to which UNDP support is relevant to Turkmenistan National Programme 2030 agenda and governance priorities as articulated in various government development programmes. Relevance of programme and project design in addressing the identified governance priority needs in UNDAF and CPD 2010 – 2015. Extent of UNDP's contribution to the governance sector in Turkmenistan.
- Extent of the progress towards the achievement of the governance programme outcome
- Extent of UN reforms influence on the relevance of UNDP support to the Government of Turkmenistan in the governance sector.

Effectiveness

- Extent of UNDP's effectiveness in producing results at the aggregate level in alignment to UNDAF and CPD/CPA
- Extent of UNDP support towards capacity development, advocacy on governance issues and policy advisory services in Turkmenistan
- Assessment of UNDP's ability to advocate best practices and desired goals; UNDP's role and participation in national debate and ability to influence national policies on legal reforms and human rights protection.
- Extent of UNDP's contribution to human and institutional capacity building of partners as a guarantee for sustainability beyond UNDP interventions
- Contributing factors and impediments and extent of the UNDP contribution to the achievement of the outcomes through related project outputs;
- Extent of UNDP partnership with civil society and private sector in promoting democratic governance in Turkmenistan;
- Assessment of the capacity and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the UNDP governance portfolio in view of UNDP support to the GoT.

Efficiency

- How much time, resources, capacities and effort it takes to manage the portfolio and where the gaps if any are. More specifically, how do UNDP practices, policies, decisions, constraints; capabilities affect the performance of the Portfolio? Has UNDP's strategy in producing the outputs been efficient and cost-effective?
- Extent of M&E contribution to increased programme efficiency.
- Extent of synergies among UNCT programming and implementation.

Sustainability

- Extent to which UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of the governance interventions.
- Extent of the viability and effectiveness of partnership strategies in relation to the achievement of the outcomes.

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- Provide preliminary recommendations on how the governance portfolio can most effectively continue to support appropriate central authorities, local communities and civil society in improving service delivery in a long term perspective

This evaluation was independent and objective and followed the principles set out in *Guidelines for Outcome Evaluation* prepared by UNDP Evaluation Office. It was based on the belief that evaluation should be supportive and responsive to the needs of UNDP, rather than become an end in itself. The overall objective of the evaluation was to provide an objective assessment of the contribution of UNDP programme to achieving respective UNDAF and CPAP outcomes. As CPAP outcomes are influenced by a full range of UNDP activities and interventions of other development partners, as well as the Government's and other stakeholders' actions, a complex picture linking UNDP outputs and outcomes has been developed that revealed a "chain of causality". Achievements and results, shortcomings and lessons learned, and possible improvements and opportunities were identified and elaborated.

Ethical considerations

The consultant followed the UNEG code of conduct and ethical responsibilities including guidelines on protection of privacy and conflict of interest.⁷ The evaluator exercised his independent judgement and provided a comprehensive and balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the DG portfolio being evaluated, taking due account of the views of a diverse cross-section of stakeholders. The consultant tried to ensure that the evaluation is based on reliable data and observations.

All confidential information obtained by any means was treated in confidence. Personal, confidential and sensitive information was not discussed with, or disclosed to, unauthorized persons, knowingly or unknowingly. The interviewees and others were treated with objectivity and impartiality.

Human Rights and Gender Equality considerations

The consultant followed the UNEG guidance on how to integrate Human Rights (HR) and Gender Equality (GE) considerations in evaluations.⁸ He examined to what extent the project benefited right-holders, including a wide range of project beneficiaries and strengthened the capacities of duty bearers and other key players other actors to fulfil their obligations and responsibilities. In examining the HR & GE aspects, the consultant was guided by international and regional conventions and national policies and strategies.

Limitations of Evaluation

The DG portfolio's contribution to UNDAF/CPAP outcomes was assessed by reviewing individual projects' progress relative to outputs and outcomes and their indicators, as well as by a qualitative analysis of the narrative reports and semi-structured interviews. There is a range of challenges in objectively capturing Turkmenistan's progress in the area of DG:

⁷ United Nations Evaluation Group, *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation*, March 2008

⁸ United Nations Evaluation Group, *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance*, 2011

UNDAF objectives are too broad, without clear and measurable indicators of success. The most obvious challenge deriving from the design of the UNDAF is a limited number of statistically measurable indicators, which makes it difficult to track progress quantitatively. To large extent it can be attributed to excessively ambitious goals in the area of DG and limited and tightly controlled by the state statistics.

Many projects do not have sufficiently strong and direct links of their outcomes to specific CPAP and UNDAF outcomes. As a result, it is difficult to conduct systemic assessment of UNDP contribution and assess how its supports complement and interact with supports provided by other development partners. In other words, the attribution is often difficult to clearly establish. Attribution is the assertion that a connection can be made between DG portfolio projects inputs, outputs, outcomes and UNDAF/CPAP outcomes. Determining attribution for outputs is relatively straightforward as outputs are the tangible products produced through activities. Demonstrating attribution for outcomes is more complicated because a number of intervening factors, in addition to the activities, may contribute to the outcome. To what extent can one attribute changes in UNDAF and CPAP outcomes to UNDP DG portfolio projects interventions? The implementation of specific activities can make a positive contribution but there is a range of other variables that affect the outcomes. Choices by the country's leadership, favourable conditions in respective state institutions and other factors can have a decisive impact. As a result, the project-DG portfolio-CPAP/UNDAF outcome link is not easily detected and the evaluator had to rely in his findings and conclusions on limited data and stakeholder views and perceptions.

Only one project “Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights” went through independent evaluation process. Clearly, the project evaluation reports could have provided the consultant with more evidence to inform the report preparation.

Lack or limited baseline data for some projects. Some projects' documents did not contain clearly defined benchmarks and indicators. As a result, the project-outcome link could not be easily detected and evaluator's findings often rely on the subjective interpretation of the available data and informants' perceptions.

Inconsistent approaches adopted across projects to define outputs, outcomes and indicators of success. In some instances projects' documents contained lists of activities and did not cover specific project outcomes and indicators of projects' success that made challenging the evaluation of projects' effectiveness and required additional data gathering.

3. DG UNDAF AND CP OUTCOMES PROGRESS

Governance comprises complex interface relationships mechanism and processes of institutions and policy-making and execution. It is “the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.”⁹ Good governance is characterized by the principles of equity, transparency, accountability, rule of law, effectiveness and strategic vision.

Both UNDAF and CPAP were developed in 2009-10 and set high expectations for Turkmenistan in supporting the Government reforms initiated by President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov. He has pledged to build “a harmonious, inspired, humane and developed society” in Turkmenistan and to

⁹ UNDP, Governance for Sustainable Human Development, New York, 1997.

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strengthen national capacity to cope with a fast-changing global environment, resulting in tangible improvements to people's lives. A series of moderate reforms in education, pension payments, and freedom of movement were initiated. Both UNDAF and CPAP were developed under the assumption that the reforms would accelerate and reach all levels of Government, as well as across all sectors of society.¹⁰

In the area of DG, the President indicated his support of broader and gradual reforms in the areas of democratization, human rights, and rule of law. In December 2008 the President of Turkmenistan lauded the elections of the parliament as a departure from the past and for the first time ever invited international observers to the country as he strived to make a transition to a more open political system which in turn will have broader implications for democratic governance and processes in both short and long term. Turkmenistan has ratified the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disability and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Optional Protocol. Turkmenistan has started to open up of a country to greater interaction with the outside world and systematically engaged in constructive dialogue with the UN human rights monitoring bodies, as shown by, among others, the active engagement in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Process. UNDP DG portfolio was designed to support these reform measures and aligned with UNDAF and CPAP priorities and official requests from Government ministries and agencies.

3.1 Outcome 1: Human rights and freedoms

Outcome 1 of the UNDAF deals with the rights and freedoms and it was planned that by 2015, rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan would be respected and guaranteed in accordance with international human rights standards as well as principles of democracy and the rule of law. Two CPAP outcomes were developed to support this goal achievement: Government authorities establish and implement mechanisms to protect and promote rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan and the Government integrates principles of good governance and rule of law into national policies, legislation and decision-making and UNDP implemented a wide range of projects supporting achievement of UNDAF and CPAP Outcome 1. Table 3 below lists specific projects and their specific expected results, as per project documents.

Table 3. DG Outcome 1: Projects and Their Expected Outcomes, as per Project Documents

Projects	Expected Results
Strengthening National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of Turkmen governmental institutions and relevant stakeholders raised on all aspects of human rights standards, instruments and follow up. • Institutional system of reporting and follow up to treaty body reports strengthened. Human Rights technical capacity is in place • Improved awareness about the principles of proper administration of justice among relevant professional circles (judges, lawyers, prosecutors, police and prison staff) • Improved access of the country's population to human rights information.
Strengthening the National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) completed which

¹⁰ UN, Turkmenistan Country Analysis 2008, May 2008

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Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights	<p>includes a specific focus on UPR implementation. The NHRAP will be results-oriented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turkmen National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights under the President of Turkmenistan advocates for HR, raises HR awareness among officials and general public, investigates and monitors implementation of HR standards • Awareness of Turkmen institutions, relevant stakeholders and public raised on implementation of newly ratified international instruments, as well as selected thematic HR issues, and UPR recommendations • Judiciary and law enforcement bodies practice enhanced professional skills to ensure access to justice
Enhancing Electoral System and Processes in Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the electoral administration efforts to improve management of the elections through capacity- building trainings, roundtables and seminars; • Nurture a democratic culture to emerge through direct support to the targeted actors of the electoral process, such as candidates, voters, the media and domestic observers; • Review and amend the legislative electoral framework with the ultimate goal of adopting a single, comprehensive electoral code by the end of 2011.
Enhancing the system of civil service in Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to improvement of the legal framework for civil service; • Support institutional development of the Academy for civil service to carry out successful programmes of teaching and training of civil servants.
Parliamentary Development Support Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced parliamentary processes/procedures to improve the quality of legislation • Improved individual capacities of MPs and professional staff to effectively fulfil their functions

Human rights focus on accountability to respect, protect, promote and fulfil all human rights of all people. Another important value of the human rights approach is the focus it places on the most marginalized and neglected in the society whose human rights are most widely denied or left unfulfilled.

In the area of human rights, UNDP DG portfolio focused on supporting the national partners with accessing international good practices, knowledge, skills and resources, capacity strengthening and human resource development across a range of sectors and supporting the Government's adoption, ratification and implementation of human rights treaty obligations, as well as greater exposure to human rights norms and values. The consultant confirms that there was a measurable improvement of appropriate human rights mechanisms in Turkmenistan. On the one hand, UNDP strengthened the Government of Turkmenistan's capacity to comply with its international human rights commitments and standards. On the other hand, UNDP improved the knowledge and capacity of rights holders to claim their rights. UNDP played a major role in strengthening the capacity of Government to report on progress against various international human rights commitments. UNDP also worked with Parliament to support harmonization of national legislation with the international commitments with regard to the implementation of UN Human Rights Conventions.

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UNDP supported Turkmenistan to undergo the UPR process that demonstrated potential for advancing the human rights situation in country. The UPR is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every four years. UPR is a State-driven process, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfill their human rights obligations. The ultimate aim of this mechanism is to improve the human rights situation in all countries and address human rights violations wherever they occur. In the presence of their peers, states are motivated to accept a large percentage of recommendations.

An impressive training effort was undertaken in developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of various duty-bearers to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. Training efforts targeted diverse groups of stakeholders, including law enforcement officials, on all aspects of human rights standards. Technical expertise and support was provided to enhance the system of reporting and follow-up to treaty bodies, including strengthening technical capacity of respective ministries and agencies. In addition to duty bearers, UNDP improved access of rights-holders to information on human rights information. For example, one UNDP project produced 13 publications containing relevant human rights information, including international human rights treaties in Turkmen and Russian (37,000 copies printed).

Significant efforts were made to develop a National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) under the , “Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights” project. UNDP was absolutely correct in supporting finalization of the NHRAP that is probably the most important cross-sectoral instrument to follow up on Treaty Bodies’ recommendations and commitments made.

The progress made in the area of human rights was very relevant to UNDP corporate priorities that consider human rights promotion as one of the most important elements of sustainable human development. As a result of UNDP support measurable progress was made towards achieving CPAP/UNDAF outcomes. Some of UNDP contributions in the area of human rights include:

- Turkmenistan accepted a number of commitments under international treaties on human rights.
- The Government has strengthened its interactions with the international treaty bodies and systematically engaged in increasingly constructive dialogue with them. For example, the cooperation of Turkmenistan with UPR and UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies was institutionalized and supports deeper implementation of the HR bodies recommendations.
- The government officials developed the necessary skills to report to and work with the UN Treaty bodies. The National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (NIDHR) was supported for the dialogue with the UN Human Rights Committee on a range of civil and political rights, such as the prohibition of torture, freedom of movement and others. In November 2011, for instance, the Government of Turkmenistan submitted its initial report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Two state delegations were prepared to work with the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and the Human Rights Committee on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).
- Extensive efforts have been undertaken to bring Turkmenistan’s national legislation in line with its international treaty obligations. In August 2012, for example, the Criminal Code was amended to give a definition of torture in line with Article 1 of Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT). The Parliament also

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increased the age for military conscription to 18, to comply with the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and age of marriage to 18 in accordance with CEDAW.

- The national report to the second UPR was prepared with UNDP support. A 10-member delegation from Turkmenistan successfully presented the national report in Geneva and each member provided feedbacks on the issues and concerns raised by member states. In response to the total of 183 recommendations made by member states and HR Council during the UPR, 171 (90 immediately and 81 after further consideration) were accepted by the Government and one was partially accepted.
- The NHRAP was drafted and submitted for the Government approval. It contains a range of specific steps towards improving the national legislation and its practical implementation and enhancing the national systems of human rights protection and raising awareness among people at large on their human rights. The draft NHRAP of Turkmenistan is based on the national standards of law, strategies and programmes, as well as on the recommendations, made for the country by the Universal Periodic Review and UN Treaty Bodies, to which Turkmenistan is a party.
- NIDHR strengthened its analytical and organizational capacities to advocate for human rights agenda in Turkmenistan.
- Database containing human rights reference materials in Russian was issued and widely disseminated. Workshops on human rights were conducted and publications disseminated.
- Human rights resource centres were opened in Ashgabat and 4 velayats of Turkmenistan: Mary, Balkan, Dashoguz and Lebap.
- Awareness of over 800 officials on human rights issues was increased. A series of trainings was organized in Ashgabat and all velayat for law enforcement officials, judges and prosecutors.

The overwhelming majority of UPR recommendations were accepted by the Government and are being integrated into the national strategies, legislation, policies and implementation practices. The consultant anticipates that implementation of all accepted recommendations may be a complex and lengthy process and the implementers will have to deal with some sensitive areas, unexpected financial implications and insufficient capacity of national stakeholders to internalize the new concepts and practices in their policies and current activities.

The consultant believes that the most fundamental outcome level change made by UNDP that was conveyed by many interviewees is a systemic change in attitudes of the public and decision makers to human rights. "Human rights" was a taboo for a long time and have never been used in official statements and during the current UNDAF cycle HR became frequently mentioned in speeches of country leadership, incorporated into the national legislation, programs and policies.

The implementation of activities in the area of human rights faced a number of challenges beyond UNDP control. For instance, the planned work on development of human rights curriculum was not implemented due to the lack of political will on the part of the Ministry of Education. The project trained 12 professors from higher educational institutions and staff members from scientific research institutes and Parliament to conduct human rights related workshops and trainings for law enforcement officials and other professionals, but the Government decided not to institutionalize the training of law enforcement agencies personnel.

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HR involves both duty bearers and rights-holders and for this UNDAF cycle the main focus was made on the duty bearers. Only a small range of interventions addressed the rights-holders with particular focus on building their capacity to understand and claim their rights. The interventions did not explicitly focus on capacitating some groups of rights-holders, such as poor families by facilitating their access to information as a right and condition to ensuring the meaningful participation, enhancement of skills, knowledge and ability to improve their own situation. Less attention has been given to improving their ability to exercise their rights by making demands on the state to fulfil its obligations towards them and to address attitudes, mindsets, culture and traditions that hinder capacity to claim rights. UNDP did not support the media to develop its capacity to identify and reflect correctly the human rights violations as well as to use ethical standards in reporting. To a large extent it can be explained by the fact that the media is heavily controlled by the state and during the current UNDAF cycle was unable to provide an independent picture of HR.

Despite significant progress made in developing and adopting legislation based on international HR principles, there are many challenges pertaining to its implementation and enforcement. The Government's decision to establish the Office of the Ombudsman that may provide oversight and to exercise jurisdiction on all matters relating to human rights may be a potential solution but it is important to ensure that it actually the needs of the vulnerable groups and individuals.

In the area of parliament development, UNDP made some contribution to achieving Outcome 1 of UNDAF and CPAP. In well established democracies, the Parliament is a main law making body that creates and maintains an enabling environment for fair and competitive political competition and is a forum for communicating the peoples' needs. The Parliament plays an important oversight function and checks on the executive branch of the state.

In Turkmenistan, the Executive Presidency tends to overshadow the other branches of the government including the Parliament, thus undermining the practice of separation of powers in a democracy. As a result, the Mejlis is primarily focused on developing new legislation in response to directions provided by the President. Multiparty system is only at the initial stages of development and the parties represented in the parliament do not fully use the limited democratic space available to them.

UNDP correctly identified a need to enhance the parliamentary processes and procedures to improve the quality of legislation and improve professional capacities of MPs. On the one hand, the President emphasized the importance of reforming the country's legal framework. On the other hand, many members were elected to Mejlis for the first time in December 2008 and did not have sufficient skills in parliamentary procedures and processes and legislative drafting.

UNDP organized round tables and study tours to expose Turkmen parliamentarians and staff to international experience of legislative process with particular focus on the countries of the region. As the needs of the Mejlis have evolved, UNDP was responsive to them and addressed such areas as strengthening knowledge of MPs in local economic development by conducting a round table with international experts, discussions of the UPR findings and recommendations, introducing the electronic document management system as well as English language courses for MPs.

As a result of UNDP support measurable progress was made towards achieving CPAP/UNDAF outcomes. Some of UNDP contributions in the area of parliament development include:

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- Good working relations were established between Mejlis and a wide range of partners at the national, regional and global levels. This facilitated the translation of global perspectives into the national context and enabled the Mejlis to be more directly and effectively involved in international co-operation and to better articulate ideas and concretize them into the relevant legislation. The MPs appreciated their exposure to the relevant international expertise and advice.
- MPs discussed recommendations of the UPR and agreed to implement them in national legislation.
- MPs strengthened their capacity in developing local socio-economic development plans based on the SWOT approach and learned about the international experiences of local economic development reforms that was highly appreciated by current MPs responsible for local development.
- Institutional capacity of the Mejlis has been strengthened through the study tours and the publication titled "Parliamentary Institutions: Basic Concepts" that features basic information on parliamentary models and relations between the executive and legislative powers.
- Improvements of the Mejlis ICT infrastructure were made and recommendations on integration of information and communication technologies in the work of Mejlis that included step-by-step plan on establishment of IT department, recruitment of additional IT staff, development of parliamentary web-site, etc. were provided. A first version of the public website of the Mejlis of Turkmenistan was developed.

In the area of electoral system and processes, UNDP was extensively supporting the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda in Turkmenistan (CEC) by enhancing national capacities of electoral observers, building the operational capacity of regional election commissions, exposing the CEC officials to international experience through study visits, as well as introducing ICT processes to daily operations of the CEC.¹¹ The electoral Turkmenistan's legislation was reviewed and recommendations were provided to harmonize it with the best international practices.

As a result of UNDP support measurable progress was made towards achieving CPAP/UNDAF outcomes. UNDP supports strengthened the capacities of CEC so that it demonstrated good level of organization in the period of elections. Countrywide trainings were organized for the staff of polling station officials as well as for electoral officials from district and provincial election commissions that helped them to conduct the first in Turkmenistan history multiparty parliamentary elections in 2013. Selected UNDP contributions in the area of electoral system and processes include:

- Zero Draft of Unified Electoral Code was developed and discussed.
- Increased awareness of national, regional and local electoral administrations, mass media and national observers in international standards of electoral administration.
- Increased awareness of CEC, Regional election commissions, National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights and Mejlis representatives in the election administration obtained through study visits.
- Improved election management procedures, including issuance of the Code of Conduct of election administration, improvement of voter lists, polling stations arrangements and polling procedures, etc.

¹¹ A comprehensive overview of the election system in Turkmenistan can be found in OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Turkmenistan Parliamentary Elections, 15 December 2013
OSCE/ODIHR needs assessment mission report 20-23 August 2013

In sum, with UNDP support, CEC has put in place procedures and equipment and implemented capacity building of election personnel, and public sensitization of election procedures.

In the area of public administration, UNDP contributions helped to build efficient, responsive, transparent and accountable public administration. The public administration plays a critical role in advancing country's human development: it provides advice to the government, designs and delivers public programs to realize the governments' policies and executes policy decisions. UNDP interventions were focused predominantly at supporting the institutional development of the Academy for Civil Service of Turkmenistan, including its structure and mandate and curriculum development.

UNDP supports positively contributed to improving professionalism, effectiveness and efficiency of a country's public sector that is vital to the success of all development activities. As a result of UNDP support measurable progress was made towards achieving CPAP/UNDAF outcomes. Some of UNDP contributions in the area of public administration include:

- Advice on public administration reforms was provided. A package of national legal documents regulating civil service system was prepared, detailed analysis of the existing legislation on civil service was conducted and proposals for adoption of new public administration laws were prepared.
- The institutional capacity of the Academy for Civil Service was strengthened and a five year development plan for the Academy was developed.
- A wide range of training and other capacity building measures were implemented. Over 90 of Academy students and teachers enhanced their knowledge in modern trends in public administration, e-governance, information security and human development. A national conference addressing the issues of global trends in public administration and public administration reforms in Turkmenistan was organized.
- Training courses on public administration, E-governance and Human Development were designed and included into the Academy curriculum and a number of staff and students completed them.
- The Academy established working relations with some academies of public administration, public administration associations, and public administration journals.

In sum, the UNDP interventions enhanced the institutional capacity of the Academy of Civil Service and increased its staff and students' knowledge in such areas as governance, public management and administration. The Academy has devised the long term action plan aimed at turning the Academy into the leading knowledge-based agency providing high quality civil servants' training, devised a list of international experts, including institutions in public administration and upgraded its curricula. Some activities were implemented to inform revision of the Turkmenistan's civil service legislation but more consistent and comprehensive measures supported by a strong political will are necessary to modernize the current public administration legislation and policies.

3.2 Outcome 2: Human Resources

Turkmenistan has enormous gas reserves, estimated at 13.4 trillion cubic meters (473.2 trillion cubic feet), and is generally ranked fourth globally, behind Russia, Iran, and Qatar. The country's oil reserves, estimated at 600 million barrels, are substantially smaller. The country has announced plans to increase gas production to 230 billion cubic meters per year (bcm/y), or 8,122 billion cubic

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feet per year, by 2030—a threefold increase from its previous production high in 1990, and over 3½ times production levels in 2012.

Turkmenistan aims to become a high-income country, and recent years have seen impressive growth toward a developed market economy, largely benefiting from high international energy prices. It is important to ensure that significant GDP growth contributes to human development of all, in particular of the vulnerable groups. The country's sustainable growth is, however, difficult to achieve in the absence of institution building and human resource development. The Government emphasizes the importance of human capital development and increasing of population living standards in its core documents such as Turkmenistan First Five Year Development Plan for the period 2012-2016.

The following section discusses UNDP's contribution to achieving UNDAF Outcome 2: "By 2015, human resources developed to achieve sustained socioeconomic development" focused on supporting the government with ensuring comprehensive socio-economic integration of all vulnerable groups including women, disabled and HIV+ persons. The projects and their expected results are presented in the Table 4 below.

Table 4. DG Outcome 2: Projects and Their Expected Outcomes, as per Project Documents

Projects	Expected Results
Support to Social Protection System Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government structures will improve legal and institutional frameworks for social protection • Based on studying of foreign countries' experience selection of NDC model acceptable for Turkmenistan, modeling pension system's financial sustainability. • Raising public awareness on the basic principles of NDC and the expected results in reimbursement of lost income because of retirement age • Establishing information system for NDC and Pension Fund's administration • Development of regulatory documents and tools (methods, regulations, instructions, classification) for Pension Fund's operation • Development of regulatory documents for NDC
Advancing Social Inclusion and Integration of Persons with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan (DBST) in addressing the needs of the deaf and blind people raised to ensure better integration to society • National legislation analyzed with an objective to review its compliance with Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities • Employment opportunities of persons with disabilities promoted • Awareness of general public and stakeholders raised on challenges of socio-economic integration of persons with disabilities (PWDs)
Social Inclusion through Leadership Skills for Disabled Women in Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of hearing and visually impaired women has increased in terms of in democratic institutions, modern socio-economic-political processes, gender issues and computer skills. • Management capacity and leadership of skills of hearing and visually impaired women raised and number of women with disabilities taking managerial positions inside the DBST increased.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearing and visually impaired women play an active role inside the DBST and in the policy dialogues with government.
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In the area of social protection system development, UNDP directly supported the goals of introducing the Notional Defined Contribution (NDC) Pension System and creating the Pension Fund of Turkmenistan outlined in the Turkmenistan First Five Year Development Plan for the period 2012-2016. UNDP made a significant contribution to establishing a financially stable pension scheme based on the mandatory pay-as-you-go pension scheme with a tight link between contributions and benefits. The system provides extensive coverage of the working-age population. In addition, UNDP strengthened capacity of public servants in policy making and administration of the new social security system. As a result of UNDP supports, measurable progress was achieved towards achieving CPAP/UNDAF outcomes. Some of UNDP contributions in the area of social protection system development include:

- Action Plan for Notional Defined Contribution (NDC) pension reform in Turkmenistan was developed with support of UNDP, approved by the Government and the pension system transitioned to NDC pension system that replaced the previous pay-as-you go system.
- Regulatory documents and tools (methods, regulations, instructions, classification) for Pension Fund's operation were developed and the Pension Fund of Turkmenistan was established.
- Extensive trainings of public servants in the pension system reforms and management were conducted: three rounds table brought together representatives of relevant Ministries and other institutions to review draft pension legislation; specialists from the district and regional branches of the Ministry of Social Protection underwent 5-day training course on various aspects of the Pension System reform and regulatory documents governing the work of the Pension Fund; and mid-level managers of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection enhanced their capacity by studying the Latvian experience in NDC pension system.
- Recommendations regarding development and establishment of ICT component of pension reforms in Turkmenistan for the new NDC system were provided.

In the area of advancing social and economic integration of persons with disabilities (PWDs), UNDP supported the broad objectives of enhancing social security of socially vulnerable groups as per Turkmenistan's First Five Year Development Plan for the period 2012-2016. UNDP focused on strengthening the capacity of Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan (DBST) in addressing the needs of deaf and blind people, provided advice on potential actions to be taken to align the national the national legislation with the UNCRPD, promoted employment opportunities for PWDs and implemented a range of activities to increase public awareness on social and economic inclusion of PWDs. As a result of UNDP supports, measurable progress was made towards achieving CPAP/UNDAF outcomes. Some of UNDP contributions in the area of advancing social and economic integration of PWDs include:

- Capacity of DBST was strengthened through training of sign language interpreters who help 190 workers of DBST in overcoming communicational barriers during working hours and different events organized by DBST and procurement of computers and assistive technology.
- Training of professionals supporting PWDs was provided. Teachers from specialized schools and specialists were trained in sign language and typhlo pedagogics and methods of teaching general subjects to visually and hearing impaired children.
- Some PWDs who received the training managed to secure employment (e.g., 14 visually impaired people started providing massage services for fee in rural areas).

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- Recommendations on how the national legislation can be improved to ensure its compliance with CRPD were developed and provided to the Government. Turkmenistan's officials learned through a study visit to Helsinki how CRPD requirements are implemented in practice. The study tour informed development of a proposal to draft a National Action Plan on disability.
- Employment opportunities of persons with disabilities were promoted by eliminating some technical barriers to employment of PWDs and adopting effective international practices of supporting employment of PWDs. A job quota regulation for PWDs was accepted as the target by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. As a result of joint advocacy efforts by UNDP and the DBST, 3 companies agreed to procure products produced by workers with impaired hearing and visioning abilities employed by DBST.
- Awareness of general public and stakeholders on challenges of socio-economic integration of PWDs was increased through round-tables and seminars of diverse stakeholders, supporting the International Days of Persons with Disabilities; distribution of awareness raising materials and launch of the website www.bdst.info that provides access to information on laws and regulations related to PWDs in different areas such as education, health, employment and covers news and information about DBST activities.

UNDP supports of PWDs' rights were extensive, but disability and CRPD requirements should be better integrated into national policies and programs. In particular, a lack of disability statistics makes it difficult to assess the extent of PWDs circumstance and targeting them through government policies and programs.

UNDP is implementing a project "Social Inclusion through Leadership Skills for Disabled Women in Turkmenistan" that will be completed in 2015. The overall objective of the project is to promote engagement of women with disabilities into development policy making. The project aims to attain the following outcomes:

- Knowledge of hearing and visually impaired women has increased in terms of in democratic institutions, modern socio-economic-political processes, gender issues and computer skills.
- Management capacity and leadership of skills of hearing and visually impaired women raised and number of women with disabilities taking managerial positions inside the DBST increased.
- Hearing and visually impaired women play an active role inside the DBST and in the policy dialogues with government.

As this project was underway when this evaluation was conducted, the consultant was unable to assess the extent of its contribution to attaining UNDAF/CPAP outcomes.

3.3 Outcome 3: Environmentally sustainable economic management expands people's opportunities to participate in social and economic development

UNDP's contribution to achieving UNDAF Outcome 3 "by 2015, the system of environmentally sustainable economic management expands people's opportunities to participate in social and economic development, especially in rural areas" focused on strengthening capacities of social groups to effectively contribute to the country's development policy and implementation processes to achieve inclusive growth and social equality. The projects and their expected results are presented in the Table 5 below.

Table 5. Projects and Their Expected Outcomes, as per Project Documents

Projects	Expected Results
Support to Accounting System Modernization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development and implementation of new accounting system through modification of the regulatory and legislative frameworks to support its successful functioning; • providing training to strengthen accounting capacities based on international best practices; • strengthening capacities of the government in the field of audit and financial control.
Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan on Small and Medium Enterprises Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of o Increasing awareness of the need for more thorough going market reforms if Turkmenistan is to successfully diversify its economy and significantly increase the contribution of the non-oil and gas private sector to aggregate output and growth; • Providing Government and private sector representatives in Turkmenistan with knowledge and direct experience of policy options and international best practices in market reforms, drawing particularly on the experience of Czech Republic and Israel; • Providing policy advice for the development and implementation of a carefully sequenced policy reform strategy building on existing government policy proposals as contained in the Concept of State Policy for Enterprise Support and Development (CSPESD) and the Law on State Support to SMEs (LSSSME).

It is unclear from the project documentation how exactly Support to Accounting System Modernization project could have contributed to CPAP outcomes, but it was well aligned with and responsive to the national program "Strategy of Economic and Political and Cultural Development of Turkmenistan up to 2020" that emphasized the importance of introducing the international standards of accounting in order to implement economic reforms, attract foreign investments and develop efficient capital markets. The project supported modernization of accounting and auditing in Turkmenistan to achieve improved accountability through the proper use of modernized accounting and audit standards and practices. More specific project accomplishments include:

- Action Plan for introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in banking sector was developed and approved by the Government. The Plan was based on a detailed review of existing national accounting and auditing system and its comparison with the international accounting standards.
- Guidelines for the application of IFRS were translated into the Turkmen language.
- IFRS Conversion Guidelines, as well as methodology and instructions were developed.
- Capacities of banking officials in IFRS knowledge of the financial reporting standards were increased through training.
- Comprehensive assistance to the Central Bank and local banks in transitioning to IFRS was provided.
- Recommendations changes and amendments to the existing legislation to advance IFRS were provided.

In sum, the IFRS in banking sector were successfully introduced and institutionalized. The importance of introducing IFRS in the broader economic sector was recognized and the Ministry of Economy is in the process of transitioning all economic entities to IFRS.

In the area of Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Development, UNDP focused on advocacy, capacity building of key

stakeholders in the Government of Turkmenistan and the private sector. As a result of UNDP supports measurable progress was made towards achieving CPAP/UNDAF outcomes. Some of UNDP contributions in the area of SME include:

- Government and private sector representatives in Turkmenistan increased their knowledge and obtained direct exposure to international best practices in market reforms, drawing particularly on the experience of Czech Republic.
- Policy advice for the development and implementation of a carefully sequenced policy reform strategy building on existing government policy proposals as contained in the Concept of State Policy for Enterprise Support and Development and the Law on State Support to SMEs was provided.
- Targeted training of women entrepreneurs as well as women-members of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan by exposing them to experiences of other countries and building their skills in business development and preparation of business plans was conducted.

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS

In all three areas of UNDAF Turkmenistan has made partial positive progress, supported by UNDP's positive contribution. Turkmenistan's political realities played a major role in determining opportunities for UNDP engagement and affected projects' outcomes. Often the political will and commitment to implement comprehensive reforms were lacking that restricted the number of areas for deeper UNDP engagement and limited their potential impact. The analysis of DG portfolio at the aggregate level is provided below.

4.1 Relevance

UNDP DG portfolio support was relevant to Turkmenistan National Programme 2030 agenda and governance priorities as articulated in various government development programmes. UNDP's projects were closely aligned with the national development agenda and responsive to stakeholders' needs. One of the key objectives of the Action Plan of the Turkmenistan First Five Year Development Plan is "Improvement in the standard of living of the population and promotion of healthy environment, introduction of measures to satisfy the demands of housing, accessibility to education, healthcare support, better working conditions, enriched culture, art and sports experience, creation of recreation zones for the people, encouragement of scientific, intellectual and creative pursuits, enforcement of human rights and interests".¹² UNDP DG portfolio was also relevant to such core UNDP corporate goals as enabling major governance processes that include constitutional reform and democratic electoral processes, promotion of economic, political, social, civil and cultural rights, strengthening of legislatures and effective governance to bring greater development benefits to citizens and increase their confidence and trust in public institutions.¹³

Through the course of implementation, the projects maintained overall relevance to the needs and priorities of the target beneficiaries and were flexible enough to adjust to their needs. The target groups and main beneficiaries of the DG programme have been primarily at the national level.

¹² Turkmenistan First Five Year Development Plan, Summary and Extracts, President of Turkmenistan's Programme for social and economic development for the period 2012-2016

¹³ UNDP Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, Changing with the World: Helping countries to achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion.

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Relevance of all DG portfolio projects was strongly confirmed through the interviews and consultations with key Government and funding partners for each project of the portfolio. The projects supporting the Government human rights agenda, for instance, were in alignment with the needs and priorities of the country, as well as with the international human rights standards binding Turkmenistan.

The relevance of DG portfolio was enhanced through extensive consultations and localization of legislative and policy advice and customization of training events to meet specific partners' needs. In those areas where the projects faced some mostly political obstacles to deepen the reform measures, they adjusted their activities to the needs and requests of the governmental partners.

Relevance was ensured by UNDP through the following strategies:

- **UNDP utilized participatory processes in developing project documents.** UNDP project documents have been drawn up in partnership with the Government, donors and other relevant stakeholders. This has ensured both government ownership and alignment with the national priorities so that the projects met the identified demand and need for UNDP support.
- **Project Boards established to oversee projects' implementation maintained the DG portfolio relevance.** Stakeholders were involved into monitoring projects' progress that helped UNDP to ensure their relevance to Government and beneficiaries' needs and priorities. The consultant reviewed numerous Project Boards' reports and confirms that they played an important role in keeping projects on track and adjusting them to maintain their relevance and effectiveness, as necessary. Project Boards helped to enhance projects' responsiveness to partners and beneficiaries' needs and achieve cost-savings.
- **Relevance was ensured through continuous examination of beneficiaries' needs and expectations and maintaining continuous dialogue with the national partners.** UNDP maintained good working relations with many national partners and was aware of their current and emerging needs that helped to identify the right donors to address them. The openness of UNDP to new ideas and possibilities for collaboration to make supports provided to the Government relevant were appreciated by both national partners and the donors.

4.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness focuses on results, not processes and the consultant examined if the DG portfolio was producing its planned outcomes and meeting intended objectives. Overall, UNDP DG portfolio was effective in producing results at the aggregate level in alignment to UNDAF and CPAP. Although more extensive project-level evaluations are needed to provide rich evidence, the available evidence demonstrates that some projects were more effective than others.

Long-term contributions of UNDP interventions to CPAP outcomes can be found in development of new legislation; capacity development at an institutional level; and capacity development at an individual level. The individuals interviewed highly evaluated the effectiveness of UNDP interventions.

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In its DG portfolio UNDP has relied on a combination of strategies that include policy advice, networking, capacity building, advocacy, and partnership. UNDP interventions in the area of HR, for instance, were effective as they managed to engage the Government in constructive dialogue with diverse international organizations on human rights. The Government's awareness in HR and confidence in acceding to the international HR treaties, skills in reporting on country's progress and alignment of the national legislation and policies with the international treaties requirements significantly increased. Moreover, the Government's willingness to adequately respond to its international obligation to promote and protect human rights increased.

The NIDHR management and staff, due to UNDP support, strongly improved their knowledge in the area of human rights and are able to support preparation of Turkmenistan's reports to international HR bodies. In addition to improved HR legislative and policy functions, the NIDHR became more open to work with citizens and it coordinates responses of ministries and agencies to correspondence received from the public.

Other examples of effective projects include the establishment of a financially stable Notional Defined Contribution pension scheme along with the Pension Fund of Turkmenistan and introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards in banking sector. Both projects addressed all the key elements necessary for high effectiveness: awareness raising of decision makers and staff, contextualization and localization of successful international practices, testing of new suggested systems/standards, extensive work with decision makers to ensure the reforms measures are adopted and extensive capacity building and follow up when the new scheme/standards were accepted.

Some projects achieved results at a more modest scale than anticipated. There are a number of reasons beyond scope of UNDP influence that affected these outcomes. Policy level interventions did not completely reach their goals because political will to implement some crucial reforms was lacking. Other reasons include limited focus on results of some projects and insufficient quality of analysis in projects' reports.

The consultant, for example, was unable to assess effectiveness of some training opportunities and study visits. Only in a few instances the outcomes of these activities were captured. Some positive examples include reporting a number of PWDs who found jobs after completing training or demonstrated ability of public servants to develop reports for international human rights bodies. SME Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan project, for instance, conducted a study tour for women entrepreneurs as well as women-members of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan to expose them to experiences of other countries and building their skills in business development and preparation of business plans but it is unclear how these new acquired skills affected the business plans or business practices of its beneficiaries.

4.3 Efficiency

Efficiency focuses on the extent to which an organization, policy, program or initiative is producing its planned outputs in relation to expenditure of resources. UNDP uses the national execution as the main modality for portfolio management. The projects have national directors appointed by the national partners and projects managers hired by UNDP. The DG portfolio includes very diverse projects and it is difficult to assess the overall portfolio performance as extensive evidence at the project level has to be collected.

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The DG portfolio is managed from UNDP CO by one Policy Analyst and an administrative assistant who oversee and support all aspects of projects' implementation. The current management and administrative systems can cope with the workload, but if the number of the projects increase, capacities in finance, procurement, oversight and monitoring and evaluation will have to be increased to match the increased demands on the organization. Some donors suggested ensuring that UNDP DG team maintains institutional memory in supporting diverse projects to support timely reporting and continuous working relations with donors and national partners alike.

DG portfolio management arrangements have largely worked well and have been uniformly praised by partners and project managers for their efficiency and effectiveness. The interviewees expressed their understanding of complex and often lengthy UNDP procurement procedures and confirmed that UNDP was always doing all its best to speed up the process to meet the partners' needs. The stakeholders greatly appreciated an opportunity to use formal and informal communication channels for dialogue with UNDP Senior Management.

Overall, the projects were producing regular monitoring reports that presented the quarterly progress as well as mid-year and annual reports. Some reports contain lessons learned and risk assessment sections but the quality, quantity and availability of projects documentation varies widely. In some cases the projects were unable to clearly identify lessons learned and produce substantiated recommendations for improved performance, including cost-saving strategies.

Each of the major projects and/or programmes is governed by a Project Board with representation from partners, including Senior Government Officials and UNDP. UNDP is represented on Boards mostly by Deputy Resident Representative. The Boards for all projects were meeting regularly usually every quarter during which the report from the previous quarter was discussed and the next quarter work plan (activities and budget) were approved. Project managers usually provided the updates on project's progress and discuss opportunities and challenges faced. In addition to ensuring relevance of projects' interventions, the Boards enhanced their effectiveness and efficiency.

Many projects such as Strengthening the National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights implemented cost-saving strategies and had their offices located either in the UN Building in Ashgabat or on the partner premises (preferred option) that generated some savings on the rent. Many training events were organized on the national partners' premises free of charge to UNDP.

The consultant is aware that many countries of the region had to spend many years and millions of dollars to advance the pension system reforms and establish pension funds. Many of these countries did not go as far as Turkmenistan with the pension reforms. It is impressive that the UNDP managed to achieve these objectives only with the \$247,907 budget.

4.4 Sustainability

Sustainability is about being strategic and looking to the future. Sustainability is the likelihood that the achievements recorded so far will be sustained beyond the project life that reflects the resilience of the achievements to financial, political, systemic and other risks. Sustainability does not mean only that the systems, activities, and practices established by the DG portfolio continue beyond their completion. It means also building on portfolio's achievements to advance to another

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level, by extending efforts into other areas. In looking at sustainability, it is important to note that governance reforms take a long time to produce sustainable results and outcomes.

Sustainability is affected by a range of factors that include current and projected demand and fiscal realities; policy environments; larger social context, demographic change, cultural variation, regional variation; and technological development. Unlike many other countries where one of the most important factors determining sustainability of interventions is the availability of funding, it is not a case in Turkmenistan where the government partners have sufficient budgets in their disposal. Only some partners, such as the Academy of Civil Service, may not have sufficient funding to expand its operations, in particular in the area of establishing cooperative relations with similar foreign academies and institutions of public administration for future academic exchanges and teaching. Political factors play a key role in determining sustainability of many interventions. There are identifiable changes in thinking about human rights norms and biases in Turkmenistan but these changes are sustainable if there is a political will to continue with HR reforms.

Many of DG portfolio projects implemented some sustainability enhancing strategies. UNDP procured furniture and equipment for the opening of a Human Rights Resource Center at the National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights under the President of Turkmenistan as well as four other centers. Upon the project completion, these centers remain open and are on the budgets of respective organizations that assumed their full ownership. The resource centres are used to provide access to specialized literature and electronic resources of human-rights related topics to general population, students and teachers of the hosting institutions and other universities, law practitioners and all those interested in human rights. Through these centres citizens can learn about their rights and increase their awareness and knowledge in human rights.

Another example of sustainability is institutionalization of human development courses in the curricula of the Academy of Civil Service. UNDP supported training of Academy representatives, including core staff and students, in human development concepts, current trends and its significance for national development. As a result, human development course was incorporated into the Academy curricula.

The sustainability of capacity building initiatives for the Mejlis is tricky as elections bring in new parliamentarians all the time who need to be capacity built. This necessitates the need for continual training for the new parliamentarians, which again may not be possible without outside support. If UNDP decides to continue supporting the Mejlis, it may be beneficial to explore a possibility of opening the Training Centre that will standardise the training and increase the sustainability of the training by making it in-house.

The evaluation found that sustainability aspects were not always a core concern area in some projects' designs. Sustainability and exit strategies were not always available and project progress reports did not always pay sufficient attention to sustainability issues.

UNDP has been overall effective in promoting sustainability of its DG portfolio projects. The partners demonstrated different degrees of their institutional, technical and financial commitments to projects' objectives. The evaluation identifies a number of successful strategies that helped UNDP to ensure sustainability of DG portfolio results:

- building strong relations with the national partners to ensure their ownership of projects and their outcomes;

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- clear focus of many projects on institutional, legislative and policy changes;
- development of effective exit strategies or possible follow-on project at the early stages of the project cycle;
- focusing on strategic country's priorities in designing project interventions; and
- incorporation of significant capacity building measures into all projects.

4.4 Gender mainstreaming

Turkmenistan has ratified the UN Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. The national legislation recognizes equality of rights of women and men and put solid institutional and legal foundations for gender equality. No gender restrictions in access to any level of education or the labour market exist. The traditionalism and gender-based stereotypes in Turkmenistan society negatively affect gender equality but the objective measures of gender equality such as UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII) that reflects women's disadvantages in three dimensions – reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity are not available for Turkmenistan.

Gender mainstreaming requires that attention is given to gender perspectives as an integral part of all activities across all programmes. This requires making gender perspectives, namely what women and men do and the resources and decision making processes they have access to, more central to all policy development, research, advocacy, development, implementation and monitoring of all aspects/activities.

In its current portfolio UNDP has only one project "Social Inclusion through Leadership Skills for Disabled Women in Turkmenistan" specifically focusing on gender empowerment. The overall objective of this project is to promote engagement of women with disabilities in development policy making.

The Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan on SMEs Development project had a specific gender empowerment component. It targeted women entrepreneurs as well as women-members of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan by exposing them to experiences of other countries and building their skills in business development and preparation of business plans.

Gender is mainstreamed across many DG portfolio projects. They, for instance, target equal participation of men and women in training and other events organized, and factor explicit gender issues into project design. The human rights and Mejlis supporting projects, for instance, supported development of proposals on the Action Plan to engender and mainstream gender equality issues into the national legislation and normative bills in accordance with international requirements as well as trained 65 stakeholders and members of the Parliament/deputies on mainstreaming gender equality issues into the national legislation. 15 women candidates were equipped with knowledge in electoral campaigns to compete for the seats in the Parliament.

The consultant acknowledges that almost all UNDP DG portfolio projects provide gender disaggregated data. It is not always clear from the reports, however, how these disaggregated data have been analysed and used to inform DG portfolio.

4.5 Partnerships

UNDP's partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective. The partnerships positively contributed to the achievement of the UNDAF/CPAP outcomes.

The UNDP partnership strategy is outlined in the CPAP. The emphasis was made on building strong relationships and a commitment to national ownership. There were generally high levels of satisfaction of all UNDP partners with the partnership arrangements. Some donors, for instance, greatly appreciated that UNDP organized donors' meetings to facilitate development and aid coordination and share information on key projects and initiatives implemented by partners to improve synergies and eliminate duplication.

Main UNDP Government partners in the area of DG include: Mejlis, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy and Development, Ministry of Finance, Central Bank, Ministry of Social Welfare. Other partners include: National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights under the President of Turkmenistan, Central Commission on conducting elections and referenda, State Statistics Committee, National Institute of Strategic Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Academy of Sciences. UNDP also sustained and strengthened collaboration with civil society partners, including the Women's Union, the Union of Manufacturers and Entrepreneurs, disabled people's organizations and other community organizations. In many instances, UNDP developed very close working relationships with government entities and had project offices located in government buildings.

Many national partners greatly appreciated responsiveness of UNDP and its ability to establish and maintain good working relations with national and international partners. Due to UNDP partnership strategies, for instance, Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan was able to communicate its policy and programmatic recommendations to diverse line ministries and establish good working relations with some key decision makers.

Some UNDP projects established good partnership relations among themselves. "Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights" and "Inclusive employment and Social Partnership" projects well collaborated in promoting human rights of PWDs. For instance, they partnered in organizing a series of workshops on CRPD reporting and aligning legislation and policies with CRPD in 2011.

Success of partnerships can be attributed to the following UNDP strategies:

- Continuous dialogue and responsiveness to partners' needs.
- Practicality and rationality in distribution of partners' roles that takes into consideration their comparative advantages.
- Use of Project Boards that comprise multiple stakeholders.
- Pursuit of synergies among UNDP projects.

5. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Aggregate findings for DG portfolio

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There is a strong perception in Turkmenistan that UNDP is a trusted and neutral partner because it functions outside bilateral relations and foreign aid policy. UNDP has considerable influence in the area of DG as evidenced by the fact that the organization has been invited to operate in politically sensitive areas such as human rights and capacity building of the Central Election Commission and the Mejlis. A summary table of UNDP contribution to achieving UNDAF and CPAP outcomes can be found in Annex 8.5.

UNDP DG portfolio has been instrumental in contributing inputs towards policy development at the national level and strengthening government capacities at the local level. Many projects managed to achieve institutional changes and these changes did not happen in a fully fledged way within the lifespan of a project. Some changes exceeded the original expectations while in other cases more reflection and adjustment of expectations and course of actions were required. Much of the success is due to the relevance of the interventions, their responsive design and implementation processes, level of government commitment, and effective UNDP implementation, among other factors.

UNDP demonstrated its capacity to work and produce measurable results in diverse areas of democratic governance, including accounting, where UNDP does not have significant corporate expertise. The evaluator confirms that DG portfolio interventions made a real and sustainable effect and were responsive to partners and individual target groups' needs. These target groups are seen at both the institutional level (e.g. individual ministries, the Mejlis, NIDHR) as well as at the individual level (e.g., state officials at the central and local levels, persons with disabilities)

UNDP DG portfolio has contributed effectively to national development priorities while at the same time it promoted compliance with international norms and standards especially in mainstreaming human rights. UNDP DG portfolio has contributed to developing national capacity by exposing government representatives and other key stakeholders to best practices in CIS and beyond, raising awareness for reform options and policy choices and assisting with diagnosis and implementation.

Both UNDAF and CPAP were designed with relatively broad articulation of expected outcomes that provided UNDP with some flexibility to develop and implement new projects when the needs emerged. Through the course of UNDAF and CPAP implementation it became clear that some outcomes were overly ambitious and set unrealistic expectations. For example, the extent and comprehensiveness of DG reforms implemented during the 2010-2014 is not sufficient to achieve UNDAF Outcome 1 by 2015 "rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan are respected and guaranteed in accordance with international human rights standards as well as principles of democracy and the rule of law." Despite some progress made in socio-economic integration of some vulnerable groups, it is unlikely that the CPD/CPAP Outcome 2.1 of comprehensive socio-economic integration of all vulnerable groups including women, disabled and HIV+ persons" will be achieved by 2015.

DG reforms are by their nature complex and long-term. Some outcomes and impacts of UNDP DG portfolio, particularly in the areas of human rights, election systems and public administration can only be expected in the long term when other elements of the DG system will improve as well and a new democratic culture will prevail. Recognition of the long-term perspective is an important reality-check in the DG portfolio.

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In 2014, when this evaluation was conducted, in Turkmenistan the political power of decision-making comes from the center and is often personalized, while the citizens and civil society have very limited opportunities and capacity to influence the DG and state's policies. The state power is concentrated in central state structures. The possibilities of emergence of alternative power centers are restricted through formal and informal rules and practices that are enforced by state institutions. Low levels of state transparency and accountability, a lack of proper separation of political and economic spheres and public administration, weak rule of law, inconsistent protection of human and minority rights and democratic freedoms, and weak civil society are some characteristics of DG system.

To a large extent this model of governance maintains some elements of the Soviet system, where the controls were applied through a highly centralized structure based on the ultimate authority of the Politburo of the Communist Party. Well-functioning democratic societies avoid the potential abuses of centralized power by establishing a DG system of checks and balances based on the rule of law that make the state more responsive and accountable to the people. Under this system, all pillars of society participate as equals to assure that rights of all are protected. A system of checks and balances penalizes self-interested leaders, and therefore creates an atmosphere contributing to equitable and sustainable human development.

In theory, the legislative branch and the judicial branch should counterbalance the power of the executive branch. In practice, in Turkmenistan the executive branch exercises considerable control over the composition and operation of both the legislative and judicial branches. Legislative oversight of the executive branch is an important element of such systems of checks and balances. The legislative branch's capacity to oversee the executive branch depends on a wide range of factors such as the competence of the opposition in extracting accounts from ministers and holding them accountable, and the ability of parliamentary committees to perform their oversight functions.

Compared to executive and legislative branches of Government, the judicial branch is underdeveloped and this seriously weakens the system of checks and balances. Control of the judicial branch, for instance, is exercised primarily through appointment of judges, control of the judiciary's budgets and a wide range of other non-transparent instruments. The independence of judges vis-à-vis the executive branch as well as their protection from undue influences are not ensured and guaranteed.

The trajectory of DG reforms in Turkmenistan clearly demonstrates that their direction and depth depends largely on the decisions of the political leadership. Unlike the first President of Turkmenistan who consolidated his political positions through repressive tactics and limited any domestic political opposition, the current President made a commitment to transition towards a more pluralistic system. If he would be able to stay on this course and deepen reform measures remains to be seen. In addition to creating formal DG institutions and practices, it is necessary to empower citizens to use these institutions, benefit from them and contribute to DG developments. The leadership should become more tolerant of political opposition and media independence and potential criticism to ensure deeper implementation of DG reforms.

5.2 Key limitations

This evaluation observed variations in UNDP's DG portfolio contribution to UNDAF and CPAP resulting from a number of factors. One major factor was the political context and degree of

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national stakeholders' political will to pursue multiple DG reforms. Limited political will negatively affected UNDP's ability to implement more extensive and systemic interventions. Some other limitations are discussed below:

Overly ambitious UNDAF and CPAP outcomes and insufficient clarity in linking projects' inputs, outputs and outcomes to CPAP and UNDAF outcomes in projects documentation. As the consultant observed already, some UNDAF outcomes such as "By 2015, rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan are respected and guaranteed in accordance with international human rights standards as well as principles of democracy and the rule of law" are excessively ambitious and broad for realities of Turkmenistan. CPAP Outcomes are more realistic "The Government integrates principles of good governance and rule of law into national policies, legislation and decision-making" but lack more concrete areas of focus. Some project documents do not establish a clear linkage between specific project outcomes and CPAP and UNDAF outcomes. For example, it is not clear how the implementation of the information and communication systems in the work the Mejlis of Turkmenistan implemented by the Parliamentary Development Support Programme could have contributed to better integration of principles of good governance and rule of law into the national legislation or policy-making processes.

In those cases where the projects do not have sufficiently strong and direct links of their outcomes to specific CPAP and UNDAF outcomes, it is difficult to conduct systemic assessment of UNDP contribution and assess how its supports complement and interact with supports provided by other development partners.

Inconsistent degree of focus on results across projects. Some projects overemphasized the importance of activities without proper focus on strategic priorities, outcomes and impacts. Some projects do not have the quantifiable and measurable outcome indicators. Many projects' reports contain extensive information on the numbers of analytical notes prepared, individuals trained, conferences and round tables conducted and number of publications produced. Although awareness raising is an important component of many interventions, it is insufficient to expose decision makers to effective international practices but a more systemic follow up and monitoring is needed to assess how new knowledge obtained and skills developed change the practices and affect decision making processes, for example. Many projects overemphasized the trainings, workshops, study tours and other activities, without significant efforts at institutionalization of these efforts. "Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights" project, for instance, indicated in its annual report "series of trainings have been conducted in previous reporting periods for groups of law enforcement officials throughout the country; however, the system for institutionalization of human rights trainings for law enforcement has never had an opportunity to be seriously discussed."

Weak UNDP DG portfolio monitoring system. The consultant was positively impressed to find many examples of measurable UNDP DG portfolio contributions to achieving CPAP and UNDAF outcomes. However, many projects' annual, mid-year and lessons learned reports along with other documentation do not capture the information about specific long-term outcomes and impacts. Moreover, the projects' documentation varies in terms of quality, depth of analysis and focus on results. UNDP Turkmenistan relies on the individual competencies of Project Managers who may not have the same level of expertise in developing results-focused project logframes and establishing and maintaining monitoring and evaluation system. UNDP does not have a DG

portfolio monitoring system to collect and verify project performance data for projects that could potentially improve quality and focus on results.

Some possibilities to conduct joint activities of UNDP projects were underutilised. The evaluator found that the opportunities for better cooperation among UNDP projects were not fully utilized. It is beneficial to promote synergy of relevant UNDP projects. UNDP project on SME development, for example, could have collaborated more closely with the projects supporting the Mejlis to convey effective practices developed and policy recommendations to decision makers.

6. LESSONS LEARNED

The evaluation identifies a number of lessons learned:

- The achievement of the UNDAF Outcomes is a joint responsibility of government, development partners, the public and, sometimes, the private sector, but without political will progress will be difficult and almost impossible in Turkmenistan.
- Advancement of DG principles and practices through new or revised legislation is important and necessary, but not sufficient to advance DG agenda as laws have to be implemented and rights-holders empowered. Law implementation is a complex and time-consuming process that requires continuous strong political will and commitment of multiple stakeholders as well as extensive capacity building of multiple government and non-government partners.
- Capacities of partners to advance the DG agenda should be continuously strengthened.
- Substantial ministry budgets make donors' help less attractive and the national partners are becoming more selective. UNDP has to maintain open line of communication and dialogue with all relevant partners to maintain old and develop new relations of trust and be able to quickly respond to any emerging needs. Maintaining such relations is critical as it takes a long time to build new ones.

UNDP DG portfolio makes the most significant contribution to achieving CPAP and UNDAF goals when its projects are:

- aligned with top Government priorities and supported by the Cabinet of Ministers, ministers and ministry staff;
- realistic and pragmatic in terms of technical feasibility and time required to successfully implement them;
- led by results-focused project managers with strong leadership competencies who establish and maintain trusting relationships with national project directors and diverse stakeholders groups;
- employ a project manager and/or staff who worked in the partner ministry/organization and know personally decision makers there;
- flexible and responsive to national partners' needs;
- strategic and address sustainability aspects from the beginning of the project;
- results-oriented on CPAP outcomes through all stages of the project cycle; and
- based on effective partnership strategies.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

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UNDP neutrality and approach of listening and responding to partners' needs and circumstances is highly valued by all partners. It is perceived to be ideologically neutral and, thus, devoid of the agendas that motivate other international development partners. This is why the Government has deliberately chosen to partner closely with UNDP.

Many Government partners expressed their interest to continue working with UNDP on such politically sensitive areas as human rights, elections, non-government organizations, decentralization, public administration reforms, etc. UNDP has considerable influence in the area of three outcomes covered by this evaluation. It enjoys a reputation of being responsive to Government needs in implementing both upstream and downstream interventions. It has demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness to the needs and circumstances of its development partners. Other UNDP strengths include:

- Well institutionalized relations with Mejlis, social sector ministries, Institute of Democracy and Human Rights under the President that create solid foundations to advance initiatives on HR, decentralization, public administration reforms, labour market and social services reforms.
- Significant corporate expertise in such areas as human rights, public administration reforms, social policies, gender rights, public administration reforms and civil society.
- Extensive expertise in designing upstream and downstream interventions promoting human rights.
- Ability to quickly mobilise high quality international expertise.
- Ability to work on sensitive areas where other international partners may not be welcomed.
- UNDP's solid management practices and effective and transparent procurement procedures that secured trust of both the Government and the donors for funds administration.
- Ability to build and promote effective partnerships with multiple international organizations, UN sister agencies and national partners.

Although UNDP has numerous comparative advantages, there is a range of factors beyond UNDP control that can hamper the expansion of DG portfolio:

- A highly vertical state decision making model that dramatically reduces the incentives for ministries to innovate and initiate new projects.
- Lack or limited statistical information and unwillingness of authorities to share statistics to develop effective interventions and monitor their impact.
- Reduction of donors' resources available because a) effects of the global recession that pressure donors to cut their aid budgets; b) transition of Turkmenistan into the cohort of upper middle income economies (World Bank classification).
- Underdeveloped democratic institutions and practices and low public "demand" for improving DG.
- Donors are looking for possibilities to achieve more with less funding and may be willing to seek other partners.
- Government is becoming more open to collaboration on sensitive political issues with a wider range of international partners and traditional strong positions of UNDP in sensitive areas may be weakened (e.g., government collaboration on anti-corruption with OSCE).
- Difficulties to find true champions of reforms in ministries/agencies who would have sufficient authority and reputation to ensure successful projects implementation.
- Many donors prefer to deliver their programmes in cooperation with companies and organizations with headquarters in their countries.

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The next UNDAF and CPAP are being developed in different political circumstances and should be driven by more realistic expectations. The Government of Turkmenistan remains committed to key principles of DG pursued through the previous UNDAF, but the process of advancing DG agenda will most likely be more piecemeal.

UNDP supported measurable advancements in DG of Turkmenistan but a range of obstacles to DG reform agenda remain unaddressed. The government operates in a highly bureaucratic manner. The country's small civil society sector has limited opportunities for development. The Turkmenistan's media scene is relatively undeveloped and all broadcast, print and electronic media remain state-owned and tightly controlled. The access to internet is limited that reduces accessibility of alternative sources of information about developments inside and outside of the country.

The future country's DG development trajectory will depend on the leadership political will and commitment. Selection of reform priorities will be done by the top leadership and to a large extent these decisions will be based on the political leadership' calculations of potential effects of DG reforms on the existing leadership legitimacy and support.

True DG cannot be built only through institutional reforms. Improvement of formal state institutions and, what is more important, ensuring that the existing formal democratic institutions actually function require change in power relationships among actors. Strategically, the rights-holders have to be empowered to make the existing formal institutions work and minimize the extent and importance of informal decision making processes. A strong and broad coalition interested in and capable of supporting DG should be built.

UNDP has strategically positioned itself as a key player in influencing legislative and policy processes. UNDP works in quite unique conditions of Turkmenistan where the national partners are not interested in any donors and international organizations' support and funding partly because the ministries' budgets are relatively high. Government partners are looking for practical country-tailored solutions addressing key priorities for Turkmenistan identified by the top political leadership. As the practice of evidence based decision making is not institutionalized in Turkmenistan, the national partners are looking for trusted partners who would identify a number of policy or programmatic solutions for their consideration. UNDP can play a critical role in this regard by bringing international expertise and exposing the national decision makers and technical experts to the best international approaches in respective areas. It is important to listen to partners needs at different levels (political, executive, technical) and help partners to identify and clearly articulate their needs. The capacity building needs are very extensive and UNDP can implement some systemic interventions that could help diverse national partners to identify potential Turkmenistan-tailored solutions and prepare fulsome project proposals.

The importance of UNDP maintaining a strategic, long-term focus was continuously reinforced during the evaluation mission. At the same time, an equal need was expressed for DG portfolio to have greater flexibility and enhanced capacity for "rapid response" to better address emerging issues and changing circumstances.

The advancements in laws were not always translated into concrete policies and Government programs. It is recommended for UNDP to emphasize the importance of effective laws and policies implementation and building effective monitoring mechanisms. As the focus can be shifted towards

supporting law implementation, UNDP may try to find a right balance between law making/policy (upstream) and implementation (downstream) levels in its projects, as appropriate. There is a consensus among donors that DG is complex, large scale and slow-moving reform, but it is important to ensure that these reforms not only build capacity within government, but that this capacity actually leads to real changes on the ground and in particular for the vulnerable groups.

7.1 Potential areas of interventions: What to Address?

UNDAF and CPAP should continue to focus on building systems, institutions, processes and mechanisms for promoting DG, gender equality and the rule of law in Turkmenistan. The clusters of interventions should be well aligned with and supportive of main top leadership commitments and be flexible enough to respond to arising needs and opportunities.

The areas of support that UNDP can pursue are very diverse. For instance, UNDP demonstrated its ability to provide effective support in such areas as economic, social, employment, and pension policies that are traditionally supported by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. UNDP can champion “UN as One” approach and coordinate efforts of multiple UN agencies with Government partners focusing on some topics of common concern to UN sister agencies and national partners. Government partners are willing to discuss different possibilities for cooperation with UNDP but ideally these consultations should be conducted simultaneously at all levels: the Cabinet, individual Ministers, members of Mejlis, and ministries’ technical staff to build broader consensus around project focus and implementation modality. The following discussion is zooming in on some potential areas of UNDP support.

Supporting Developing of National HR-based Vision and Strategy for Human Development.

Democratic institutions, policies and empowerment of rights-holders do not confine themselves to technical capacity building and adopting HR legislation, but includes also creating a democratic space in which citizens can participate in country development. Turkmenistan needs a vision for the future and UNDP can use the National Human Development Report process to establish a platform for such societal discussions where the decision makers, academics, policy implementers, NGOs and members of public can share their views on future of the country.

Economic growth is fundamentally important for human development, but it does not automatically result in decreased inequalities and human development of all. High levels of human development cannot be achieved when some groups and individuals are vulnerable and excluded and when some groups face barriers to their participation in economic, social, cultural, and political life. How to create an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests? How to empower and allow all members of society to contribute to and benefit from growth on an equal basis? How to use the revenue generated through the natural gas and oil exports in the interests of sustainable human development? People are the true agents of change who make human development possible and it would be beneficial if the country focuses on its human capital as an engine of sustainable human development and mainstreams HR into all relevant legislation and policies. A healthy, well educated and trained population is an objective in itself as well as a crucial factor contributing to accelerated social and economic and ultimately human development. Human capital development results in increased ability of a country to absorb modern technology, improved quality and productivity of the workforce, which invariably leads to increased productivity and economic growth that are fundamentally important for human development.

In developing a vision for future of Turkmenistan, the NHDR team may explore the role of democratic institutions and practices for sustainable human development. What should be the priorities in democratization: increasing the number of potential voters and improvement of election processes, expanding the domains of democratic control by increasing citizens' involvement in policy making, improving representation and responsiveness of elected officials, decentralization and empowerment of local residents, etc.? Once more narrow priorities are identified, it would be much easier to operationalize them in UNDAF and CPAP development exercises and depart from too generic for conditions of Turkmenistan statements about DG development.

Promoting HR among lawmakers

UNDP is well positioned to continue working on multiple areas of promoting HR agenda. The interventions focusing on HR should find a proper balance between capacity building of duty bearers and empowerment of rights-holders and create the enabling environment that promotes the articulation of common HR agenda. Many citizens are unaware of their rights and considerable effort towards sensitizing citizens should be a priority. It is necessary to promote and support institutionalization of human rights education in the national education curriculum to ensure that duty-bearers and rights-holders are fully equipped with the necessary HR knowledge.

In Mejlis, capacity building of its members in the area of HR should be continued. The recent elections to Mejlis resulted in renewal of the MPs and to ensure that HR remains on the MPs agenda, it is advisable to establish a Training center where MPs and support staff can be trained on various aspects of law-making, such as analyzing legislative acts, conducting public discussions, etc. UNDP can continue supporting networking of MPs with other national parliaments and global parliamentary associations to familiarize MPs with other lawmaking systems and laws and help initiate relevant legislation.

UNDP should advocate the need for the Parliament to monitor implementation of its core laws. This area of Mejlis activity will be new, and UNDP can support a pilot initiative to review implementation of a number of selected laws, including desk research, interviews, field visits, consultations with Committees, line ministries and courts. This pilot can be followed by a series of workshops to identify successes and bottlenecks and develop a more robust accountability system.

Supporting Judicial branch

The implementation of HR framework is problematic if judicial system is weak and dependent on the executive branch. Control of the judicial branch is exercised primarily through control of the judiciary's budgets, appointment of judges and a wide range of other non-transparent instruments. The independence of judges vis-à-vis the executive branch as well as their protection from undue influences is not fully ensured and guaranteed. Accusations of biased proceedings in court cases are common. UNDP can explore this highly sensitive area, identify and implement a few capacity building projects as entry points into reforming the judicial system.

Strengthening Public Administration to Support Laws and Policies Implementation

One of the biggest bottlenecks in advancing DG is weak capacities of the public administration and poor translation of the existing legislation into policies and programs and their implementation. Turkmenistan, like many other post-Soviet states, has poor implementation record where laws that are aligned with core international principles often remain statements of good intentions without any follow-up implementation and proper reporting. One of the most important tasks that could help

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in supporting effective law implementation is to increase effectiveness of policymaking institutions and processes and strengthen capacity of public administration by introducing core elements of the policy cycle with focus on use of data, development of policy options, implementation and monitoring in ministries and central agencies.

Supporting training materials and templates can be developed and widely disseminated among central agencies and line ministries. Technical support can be provided in developing of guides and protocols to ensure consistency in policy products and processes. UNDP may provide practical and hands-on support on how to assess policy alternatives relying on solid evidence (e.g., distributional effects of policy reforms on the well-being or welfare of the targeted groups), identify policy instrument(s) to be used, and outline sequence of implementation steps. Particular attention could be paid to policy implementation and the social bloc ministries may be supported in developing policy implementation plans that may include specific targets, performance measures and indicators capturing policy success. Particular attention could be paid to promoting participatory approaches to policymaking.

If these measures and interventions are well received by the national partners, UNDP may move eventually towards more systemic public administration reforms and help the Government with functional reviews to address operational inefficiencies, weak accountability for results, coordination problems and other limitations.

If such broad public administration reforms are not feasible in the next CPAP, UNDP may focus on more narrow areas of public administration reforms such as development of policy papers, producing of budget estimates, and improvement of management processes to implement the existing and forthcoming laws and policies.

Strengthening Civil Society

Through its potential work on supporting civil society, UNDP can contribute to strengthening the demand side of DG. The consultant believes that simple emulation of some CIS countries' experiences in building civil society may not work in Turkmenistan and country-tailored solutions would have to be found. UNDP may support the National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights under the President of Turkmenistan with modernizing the civil society legislative framework to reflect the relevant international practices.

UNDP is perfectly positioned to collaborate with some CSOs and strengthen their capacities. The primary focus can be made on supporting well established CSOs in the areas of policy dialogue and mobilizing constituencies, encouraging ministries to engage CSOs into service delivery for some vulnerable groups and strengthening the role of local CSOs in community decisionmaking. One sensitive area where UNDP may engage is mediating some dialogues of Government officials and CSOs at the national and local levels. Such a dialogue can improve design of policies and strategies, make them better informed and targeted. It will empower CSOs by fostering a sense of inclusion and by strengthening the voice and influence in decision making.

Supporting reforms of the social sector

When this evaluation was underway, UNDP was finalizing a joint project document with the Ministry of Labour. As it was observed by numerous national and international experts, many decisions in Turkmenistan are made without evidence and statistical information. UNDP may collaborate with

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the social bloc ministries and relying on the existing statistics and internal administrative data identify social groups vulnerable to exclusion and specific barriers to inclusion they face.

The forthcoming UNDAF can address vulnerability in a comprehensive and inclusive manner across all vulnerable groups by identifying these groups and barriers they face. Once such an analysis is completed, it will be easier to develop projects supporting vulnerable social groups and addressing barriers they face. Regardless of the focus area, the projects can combine downstream and upstream interventions to achieve the maximum impact.

Substantial support can be provided to build the institutional and human capacities of the social bloc ministries in labour policies, standards, enforcement, and social service delivery. Social ministries organizational structures can be optimized, with particular focus on optimization of local offices of respective ministries and accountabilities, staff composition and competencies, work load per staff, services provided, etc.

UNDP is well positioned to support social inclusion of PWDs and has practical experience in implementation of interventions supporting PWDs obtained through its Advancement of social inclusion and integration of persons with disabilities project. Potential interventions can support the Government in meeting the requirements of the CRPD and provide technical support in all areas, including accountability mechanisms, sequence of reforms, sector-specific policies and programs and public reporting requirements.

Promoting Gender Equality

Turkmenistan is signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. UNDP may continue its work on mainstreaming and promoting HR agenda and using diverse advocacy and advisory tools to leverage broader support for, and commitment to, gender equality and women's empowerment.

Gender mainstreaming should be addressed and integrated at all levels – so that all stakeholders are aware of their obligations to mainstream gender and human rights into all their processes and functions (such as strategic planning, budgeting) – and to demonstrate gender responsiveness at all levels. UNDP should have a gender strategy that can be developed in close collaboration with UN Women and national partners. Potential key strategic domains of intervention for UNDP include gender-responsive budgeting and planning, gender equality opportunities, gender stereotypes and improving gender sensitivity – within both the government and the society. UNDP may support gender mainstreaming into public policy and legislation as well as educational system and may conduct public awareness campaigns on gender equality. It may be beneficial to implement cascade trainings of public servants at all levels, focus on practical aspects of their work and incorporate gender-related issues into the educational programmes for civil servants.

In assessing the processes and effects of gender mainstreaming, it is important to collect and report on the gender specific data and establish specific performance measures of gender mainstreaming. In particular, it is necessary to assess the impact of the revival of traditional religious and cultural values that constrain women's roles on gender equality.

Supporting Decentralization

Presently, as far as the consultant understands, there is no clearly defined strategy regarding decentralization. If the Government were to announce at any time that some central institutional

powers are to be decentralized, the local authorities would clearly be unprepared to advance the goals of decentralization. As UNDP has solid global and regional expertise in supporting decentralization and Local Plans development, it is well positioned to strengthen capacities of local authorities. The probability that broader decentralization reforms that could re-define the roles and responsibilities of central government bodies and municipalities, decentralize the authority for service provision to the lowest possible level and redefine responsibilities for budget revenue collection and expenditures are extremely low but it is advisable for UNDP to establish good working relations with all or some local authorities, conduct their needs assessment and implement some capacity building measures on a pilot basis to support potential piecemeal decentralization efforts.

7.2 DG Portfolio Design, Implementation and Management, including Coordination and Monitoring of Outcomes: How To Address?

The discussion below was informed by this evaluation exercise. It identifies specific suggestions for UNDP consideration on how programme design, implementation and management can be further enhanced to address potential interventions presented above.

Make UNDAF more realistic and identify priority areas for UNDP interventions.

Some UNDAF outcomes were based on unrealistic expectations, with unclear measures of success. To make UNDAF more relevant, it can be annually reviewed to maintain its currency and reflect the progress towards its prescribed outcomes. If annual reviews are too cumbersome to undertake, a mid-term review can be conducted to identify and address implementation concerns and ensure UNDAF relevance. In a highly hierarchical decision making system in Turkmenistan, the priorities may change and UNDAF will have to be revised to ensure orchestrated response from the UNCT. It is also important to ensure that new projects are clearly linked in their results chains to CPAP and UNDAF outcomes.

Establish umbrella advisory project with sufficient degree of flexibility.

While the importance of UNDP maintaining a strategic, long-term focus is fundamental to achieving CP outcomes, equal need exists for its interventions to have greater flexibility and enhanced capacity for rapid response to better address emerging issues and changing circumstances especially in upstream interventions where political and economic circumstances may rapidly change. It is advisable to establish an umbrella cross-sectoral policy advisory project that will quickly engage international expertise to address emerging Government needs. The decisions on expertise needed and specific parameters of the engagement will be made by the Government and UNDP senior decisionmakers.

Identify and empower reforms champions

As this evaluation demonstrated, one of the key factors behind many DG portfolio projects' success were the "change agents" – individuals with significant experience in different government institutions who were trusted by decisionmakers and were able to convince them to pursue projects' goals. UNDP can identify these "change agents" in diverse ministries and agencies and focus on their capacity building. They could be trained in evidence-based policy making, modern approaches to public administration management, English, and leadership skills. Funding and in-kind contributions such as trainers can be provided by new EU members.

The curricula and courses that will be developed through this initiative of “change agents” capacity building can be adapted by the Academy of Civil Service under the President of Turkmenistan for its training programs. The Academy can address internal ministries’ capacity building and human resources development needs, focusing on strengthening training policies and programs. UNDP may support the Academy and respective Government agencies in ensuring that training policies and programs built on the best international public administration theories and practices will become an integral part of the larger human resources management scheme.

Build on effective partnerships developed through the current CP cycle and create new ones. The evaluation confirms that good relations and trust among partners play more important role than evidence or analysis in decision making. UNDP is advised to focus on maintaining and establishing new networks built on trust among diverse groups of stakeholders in DG. In projects underway, it is necessary to maintain continuous dialogues with key stakeholders to gather their feedback on projects’ performance, identify areas for improvement, explore potential partnership arrangements and sustainability measures as well as build their ownership of projects’ outcomes. In those areas where UNDP engagement is limited such as public administration or judicial reform, UNDP may start building new relations with key players.

Often the government partners do not realize the extent of problems they have to deal with nor possess the necessary knowledge to address them. It is advisable to engage them early on into Needs Assessments to determine the type of policy, intervention and services required. It will capture the nature, magnitude and distribution of a problem and the extent to which there is a need for an intervention (e.g., program, policy) to address it. Stakeholders may prioritize the issues to make the interventions better targeted and better identify the role of UNDP. In addition to building partners’ capacity and ownership, the engagement of partners from the early stages of project development may build long-term relations of trust between the national partners and UNDP. It is also advisable to use resources of current National Project Directors more proactively and seek their input into identifying the areas of potential follow-on projects and sustainability-building measures that are relevant to their ministries/agencies.

Explore and implement “UN as One” programming

The evaluator found that UN system is still quite fragmented in its DG work. Such realities of Turkmenistan as relatively small size of the country, small budgets of UN agencies, complementarities of UN sister agencies and some examples of effective collaboration create favourable conditions to pursue UN as One modality. The implementation of UN as One can increase effectiveness and impact of the UN System, demonstrate the practical benefits of effective horizontal collaboration to national partners, and reduce UN system transaction costs.

UNDP can promote this model and work together with UN sister agencies to identify a common theme, develop a unified UN approach, clarify partners’ roles and responsibilities and develop a few joint programs. One of potential areas is supporting the Government partners with the implementation of legislation that was adopted to support country’s compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Undoubtedly, full implementation of the Convention requirements will take time, resources, and commitment by the Government, respective line ministries, and other relevant stakeholders and it hardly could be achieved if horizontal collaboration of respective ministries and other partners does not improve. It is not possible, for example, to increase skills and employability of persons with disabilities without reforms in education, healthcare, social sectors and labour markets: they should be addressed

through well coordinated policy measures across the relevant ministries. UN as One joint project along with Government partners can identify strategic priorities, coordinate ministries' and UN sister agencies' activities and jointly report on progress made.

Improve horizontal collaboration among UNDP projects

The consultant acknowledges that some opportunities for collaboration among UNDP projects were not fully utilized. It is recommended that opportunities be sought for cross-sectoral programming, in light of the fact that development issues are becoming increasingly cross-sectoral in nature. The current UNDP practice architecture somewhat constrains cross-sectoral programming since the organization is structured around the practice areas.

The application of upstream and downstream approaches can be an effective mechanism to build and/or strengthen horizontal and vertical networks and links among UNDP projects and achieve sustainable impact at the national and local levels. For example, UNDP projects targeting PWDs developed significant expertise and knowledge about their needs, and their success should be supported by strong policy dialogue and knowledge sharing work at the national level potentially through the project supporting the Mejlis. If these lessons are not translated into the policy area, there is always a risk that downstream interventions can become narrowly oriented at particular vulnerable groups with limited impact on national level UNDAF and CPAP outcomes.

Actively promote UNDP among donors and national partners

UNDP should continue promoting itself as a strong partner that can be trusted with implementation of a wide range of initiatives. Public relations campaigns and targeted dissemination of information can be implemented. UNDP projects' results and achievements should be more widely disseminated, including amongst the direct beneficiaries, so as to increase the level of national and local ownership and the sustainability of the projects' results. These activities will further enhance partners' trust and credibility of UNDP and will help in attracting funding.

In addition to comparative advantages discussed above, UNDP may explore opportunities to collaborate with donors in the areas of their interest. For instance, UNDP project with the Central Bank was funded by USAID that due to political sensitivities could not work directly with the Central Bank. UNDP demonstrated its flexibility and addressed both the Central Bank and USAID needs and implemented a highly effective project in the area where it does not have a corporate expertise.

In addition to targeting specific areas of DG that may be of interest to specific donors (e.g., US embassy and civil society development), UNDP may offer its services to donors and partners in pooled donor funds management. In specific conditions of Turkmenistan where the donors' budgets are limited, the pooled funding model can ensure consistency of donor assistance. The pooled funding model may work very well in Turkmenistan as it creates synergy and reduces possibilities for duplications and resource wasting when separate funding mechanisms are in place.

Some donors may be interested in UNDP operational capacity to effectively and transparently implement projects. UNDP has transparent and effective management practices and procurement rules that the donors and the Government may find attractive in executing projects. As fighting corruption is one of the Government priorities, UNDP may demonstrate how transparent procurement system should function and ensure that the public funds are effectively and efficiently used. UNDP can eliminate risks to integrity in public procurement for many donors and Government funded initiatives.

Enhance M&E function in UNDP

Strengthening of M&E function in UNDP DG portfolio can enhance the quality of interventions by setting specific and measurable output, outcome and impact measures; improve efficiency of allocation of resources; and support regular and results-oriented reporting on the projects' progress and inform corrective actions, if necessary.

It is advisable for the DG portfolio to have an internal system of outcome monitoring on the basis of the forthcoming UNDAF and CPAP. This system should provide enhanced measurable indicators of outcome and outputs achievement that should be monitored from the beginning of the projects. In addition to meeting UNDP accountability requirements, ongoing project monitoring is an effective measurement mechanism to assess projects' performance that reduces the need in independent evaluation.

Strengthening of UNDP based M&E function will promote results-based management practices among all UNDP managers who will learn how to formulate outcome focused indicators, monitor progress of their projects using such indicators and adjust their projects or DG portfolio to maximize their contribution to UNDP to CPAP outcomes. The performance measures would help the projects to stay focused on CP outcomes and monitor their performance from the beginning of the projects. Dedicated UNDP M&E officer can focus more on measuring DG portfolio outcomes through field visits, clients and stakeholders surveys, focus groups as well as by analysing the national statistics and other data.

One effective method for charting progress toward interim and long-term outcomes is through the development and use of a DG portfolio logic model. It can picture how different projects within the portfolio work by linking outcomes (both short- and long-term) with projects activities/processes and inputs. The utilization of the logic model will allow to clearly separate outputs, which are tangible, time-bound products resulting from projects' activities from outcomes which are changes in the real world, triggered by a set of outputs.

At the level of DG portfolio projects, the project outcome indicators should be more results-oriented. For instance, the project goals cannot be measured only in terms of the numbers of individuals trained, but also should have clear measures how clients' lives or professional activities have improved as a result of the training. For instance, such indicators as numbers of trainings for journalists; number of reference materials provided and number of lectures for students conducted are good input measures, but they do not capture the outcomes. Some outcome measures may be satisfaction of recipients with the training received, adoption of training modules into university curricula, utilization of skills learned in mainstreaming HR in sectoral policies, etc.

The measures for upstream policy interventions can include a number of specific policy recommendations adopted by the Government, satisfaction of clients with the quality and timeliness of analytical work provided by UNDP projects as well as independent experts' reviews of projects' analytical products. Some other examples include: number of local development plans drafted, approved and implemented; number of recommended policy changes accepted and reflected in policy instruments; public awareness in disability matters increased as measured by survey results; community level coverage of social services increased in X communities, etc. Projects' documents and LogFrames should be regularly updated to reflect the changing circumstances.

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Through enhanced M&E functions UNDP will be able to provide specific and measurable evidence demonstrating how and where the organization is making a measurable contribution to DG that is critically important in promoting UNDP among its partners. Moreover, UNDP would be able to demonstrate relying on the evidence those areas where the Government may consider implementing legal, policy and institutional changes.

8. ANNEXES

8.1 Terms of Reference for the evaluation

Position title:	International Consultant of outcome evaluation of Democratic Governance Portfolio within UNDP/Turkmenistan Country Programme 2010 – 2015
Location:	Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
Vacancy Type:	
Application Deadline:	_____
Additional Category:	International Consultant
Type of Contract:	IC
Post Level:	_____
Languages Required:	English
Starting Date (date when the selected candidate is expected to start):	<u>End of March – beginning of April 2014</u>
Expected Duration of Assignment:	22 working days

I. Background

UNDP in Turkmenistan promotes human development and supports the national development priorities. UNDP partners with the Government of Turkmenistan and other development organizations on a broad spectrum of issues relating to democratic governance, environment and energy, and human development. In all these areas, we help strengthen national capacity and pilot innovative solutions.

UNDP contributes to strengthening the democratic principles in Turkmenistan by providing support to development of responsive national institutions, human capacity and fostering inclusive participation. In this area, the Government of Turkmenistan partners with UNDP to improve the national capacity to report to the UN treaty bodies, promote and protect human rights, enhance the national electoral system and parliamentary processes and modernize public administration. In partnership with the European Union UNDP also supported the introduction of integrated border management methods in Turkmenistan.

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UNDP's partnership with Turkmenistan in the area of human development is focused on supporting national efforts to achieve sustained socio-economic development and high living standards of the population in accordance with the national development plans and priorities, including MDGs. In particular, UNDP helps strengthening the National Programme on Control of Tuberculosis, socio-economic integration of vulnerable groups of population and modernizing public administration.

UNDP's work in governance and human development composes the two pillars of its Democratic Governance Portfolio.

These works are captured in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2010 – 2015 and the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) and Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) for the same period. The UNDAF provides a collective, coherent and integrated United Nations response to national needs and priorities. UNDP CPD is a programmatic document with CPAP as its operation plan specifying how UNDP Turkmenistan contributes to the realization of outcomes in UNDAF.

Specifically, UNDP democratic governance portfolio (hereafter referred as DG portfolio) is contributing to UNDAF outcomes, namely

- Outcome 1: By 2015, rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan are respected and guaranteed in accordance with international human rights standards as well as principles of democracy and the rule of law
- Outcome 2: By 2015, human resources developed to achieve sustained socioeconomic development
- Outcome 3: By 2015, the system of environmentally sustainable economic management expands people's opportunities to participate in social and economic development, especially in rural areas
- Outcome 4: By 2015, peace and security in Turkmenistan, both on the national level, as well as on the level of regional cooperation, are ensured in accordance with international standards

In CPD and CPAP, UNDP work in governance and human development were further defined in the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1.1 Government authorities establish and implement mechanisms to protect and promote rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan
- Outcome 1.2 The Government integrates principles of good governance and rule of law into national policies, legislation and decision-making
- Outcome 2.1 The government ensures comprehensive socio-economic integration of all vulnerable groups including women, disabled and HIV+ persons
- Outcome 3.1 Men and women of all social groups effectively contribute to the country's development policy and implementation processes to achieve inclusive growth and social equality
- Outcome 4.1 National authorities effectively apply Integrated border management principles

Currently UNDAF and CPD are coming to its completion and the process of the new UNDAF development for 2016 - 2020 and rollout of UNDAF development has been launched. As one of the key steps of UNDAF development, a country analysis will be carried out in April 2014 with the purpose to identify priority development challenges in Turkmenistan and to propose potential areas for UN-Government cooperation for the new UNDAF. In order to ensure that the priorities and results in the new UNDAF are as strategic as possible and support of UN are effective, they must be based on the lessons learned on implementation of UNDAF and CPD, for the case of UNDP.

II. Evaluation Purpose

In light of the above, UNDP Turkmenistan decided to conduct a portfolio evaluation to 1) capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of UNDP's contributions to democratic governance and human development in the country as articulated in the in CPD/CPAP and UNDAF and 2) to conclude lessons learned of UNDAF and CPD implementation. The evaluation will be independently carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy.

The evaluation will objectively evaluate the contribution of the DG Portfolio projects to the achievement of the relevant 2010-2015 UNDAF and CPD Outcomes through assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions used under the framework of the DG Portfolio. It will also contribute to strengthening programming and results at the country level, specifically informing the developing of the next UNDAF in terms of UNDP's contribution in DG and human development areas. Specifically the evaluation will focus on the followings:

Outcome status: Determine whether or not the outcomes have been achieved and, if not, whether there has been progress made towards their achievement, and also identify the challenges to attainment of the outcomes. Identify innovative approaches and capacities developed through UNDP assistance. Assess the relevance and adequacy of UNDP outputs to the outcomes.

Underlying factors: Analyze the underlying factors beyond UNDP's control that influenced the outcomes including opportunities and threats affecting the achievement of the outcomes. Distinguish the substantive design issues from the key implementation and/or management capacities and issues including the timeliness of outputs, the degree of stakeholders and partners' involvement in the completion of outputs, and how processes were managed/carried out.

Strategic Positioning of UNDP: Examine the distinctive characteristics and features of UNDP's governance programme and how it has shaped UNDP's relevance as a current and potential partner in Turkmenistan. The Country Office (CO) position will be analyzed in terms of communication that goes into articulating UNDP's relevance, or how the CO is positioned to meet partner needs by offering specific, tailored services to these partners, creating value by responding to partners' needs, mobilizing resources for the benefit of the country, not for UNDP, demonstrating a clear breakdown of tailored UNDP services and having comparative advantages relative to other development organizations in the rule of law result area.

Partnership strategy: Ascertain whether UNDP's partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective. What were the partnerships formed? What was the role of UNDP? How did the partnership contribute to the achievement of the outcome? What was the level of stakeholders' participation? Examine the partnership among UN Agencies and other donor organizations in the relevant field. This will also aim at validating the appropriateness and relevance of the environment's outcome to the country's needs and the partnership strategy and hence enhancing development effectiveness and/or decision making on UNDP future role in governance.

Lessons learnt: Identify lessons learnt and best practices and related innovative ideas and approaches in relation to management and implementation of activities to achieve related outcomes. This will support learning lessons about UNDP's contribution to the governance

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outcomes over the UNDAF cycle so as to design a better assistance strategy for the new programming cycle.

While some evaluations have been conducted at the project level, this evaluation will look at the DG Portfolio entirely and bearing in mind the importance of the current evaluation to the development of the visioning for the DG Portfolio in the future. The result of this evaluation will provide baseline for the new country programme beyond 2015.

Objectives and scope of work

The evaluation will assess the collective performance of five years of Democratic Governance Portfolio in 2010-2014. The evaluation will cover all project of UNDP DG portfolio has completed or been implementing in the current programme cycle with estimated total programme budget (for 2010 – 2014) of \$8,269,127.00. A list of the projects and its linkage to CPD outcomes is attached as Annex 1.

The objectives of the evaluation will be to look into the following:

Relevance

- Extent to which UNDP support is relevant to Turkmenistan National Programme 2030 agenda and governance priorities as articulated in various government development programmes. Relevance of programme and project design in addressing the identified governance priority needs in UNDAF and CPD 2010 – 2015. Extent of UNDP's contribution to the governance sector in Turkmenistan.
- Extent of the progress towards the achievement of the governance programme outcome
- Extent of UN reforms influence on the relevance of UNDP support to the Government of Turkmenistan in the governance sector.

Effectiveness

- Extent of UNDP's effectiveness in producing results at the aggregate level in alignment to UNDAF and CPD/CPA
- Extent of UNDP support towards capacity development, advocacy on governance issues and policy advisory services in Turkmenistan
- Assessment of UNDP's ability to advocate best practices and desired goals; UNDP's role and participation in national debate and ability to influence national policies on legal reforms and human rights protection.
- Extent of UNDP's contribution to human and institutional capacity building of partners as a guarantee for sustainability beyond UNDP interventions
- Contributing factors and impediments and extent of the UNDP contribution to the achievement of the outcomes through related project outputs;
- Extent of UNDP partnership with civil society and private sector in promoting democratic governance in Turkmenistan;
- Assessment of the capacity and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the UNDP governance portfolio in view of UNDP support to the GoT.

Efficiency

- How much time, resources, capacities and effort it takes to manage the portfolio and where the gaps if any are. More specifically, how do UNDP practices, policies, decisions, constraints; capabilities affect the performance of the Portfolio? Has UNDP's strategy in producing the outputs been efficient and cost-effective?

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- Extent of M&E contribution to increased programme efficiency.
- Extent of synergies among UNCT programming and implementation.

Sustainability

- Extent to which UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of the governance interventions.
- Extent of the viability and effectiveness of partnership strategies in relation to the achievement of the outcomes.
- Provide preliminary recommendations on how the governance portfolio can most effectively continue to support appropriate central authorities, local communities and civil society in improving service delivery in a long term perspective

Based on the above analysis, provide recommendations on how UNDP Turkmenistan Country Office should adjust its programming, partnership arrangements, resource mobilization strategies, working methods.

All UNDP evaluations need to assess the degree to which UNDP initiatives have supported or promoted gender equality, a rights based approach and human development. In this regard, UNEG guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations should be consulted.

III. Evaluation methodology

The evaluation of the DG Portfolio should focus on outcomes rather than outputs, particularly on transformational change and the role of partners. It is expected that the evaluation will take both a quantitative and qualitative approach. The evaluation will be carried out as per the Results Framework of CPD in which outcome and output indicators and targets were defined to measure performance and status of implementation, strengths and weakness of DG portfolio. It will therefore encompass a number of methods, including:

- Desk review of relevant documents such as the studies relating to the country context and situation, project documents, progress reports, and evaluation reports;
- Discussions with senior management and programme staff Interviews and group discussions with partners and stakeholders. The level and list of partners and stakeholders to meet to be agreed with UNDP;
- Field visits to selected project site(s);
- Consultation and debriefing meetings.

The evaluators will design a detailed evaluation plan. They will submit a short inception report that will describe:

1. How the evaluators understood the programme logic in developing the evaluation plan.
2. The detailed evaluation plan, indicating the methods to be used, information sources to be looked at for each evaluation question, and tentative timeline of the evaluation.

The evaluator will have the support of the DG portfolio staff, UNDP Turkmenistan country office, as well as the country office's M&E Focal Point. At the outset, the DG portfolio will provide the evaluator with an overview of the projects, as well as the results of preliminary data collection and analysis, which will include contextual information, project and outcome monitoring data, and relevant documents including project documents, progress reports and evaluation reports.

The Experts/consultant should provide details in respect of:

- Documents reviewed;

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- Interviews;
- Field visits;
- Questionnaires, if any; and
- Participation of stakeholders and/or partners.

Documents for study by the evaluator

The desk review should include, but not be limited to, the following documents:

1. UN/UNDP Turkmenistan documents:
 - UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), 2010-2015;
 - UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP), 2010-2015;
 - Common Country Assessment, 2008;
 - UNDAF reports for 2010-2014;
 - UNDP Strategic Plan for 2014-2017.
2. UNDP Corporate Policy documents;
 - Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results;
 - UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators;
 - Standard Operating Procedures;
 - Internal Control Framework.
3. Reports and other available materials of the projects for evaluation:
 - Project documents;
 - Project quarterly and annual reports, PR and outreach materials;
 - Any available evaluation reports under projects within Democratic Governance Portfolio indicated in **Objectives and Scope of Work** section of the current TORs.

Implementation arrangements and timeframe

The Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP Turkmenistan country office will be the evaluation manager. The evaluators will report to the evaluation manager.

The tentative timeframe is as follows:

Date	Activity
March-April 2014	Launch of the evaluation
1-5 days	Desk review (off-site)
6-11 days	On-site de-briefing, interviews, project site visit(s)
12 day	Presentation of preliminary findings and the draft outline of the report
Day 13-17	Preparing draft report (off-site)
Day 18 – 22	Follow up/finalization of report upon receiving comments from UNDP and relevant partners (off-site)

If need be, the evaluator will undertake field visits to project site(s). Options for field trips should be provided in the inception report.

Expected outputs

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The evaluation is expected to deliver:

- **Evaluation inception report**—An inception report should be prepared by the evaluator before going into the full-fledged evaluation exercise. It should detail the evaluators' understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods; proposed sources of data; and data collection procedures. The inception report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables, designating a team member with the lead responsibility for each task or product. The inception report provides the programme unit and the evaluators with an opportunity to verify that they share the same understanding about the evaluation and clarify any misunderstanding at the outset.
- **Draft evaluation report** – UNDP Turkmenistan will review the draft evaluation report to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria (See Annex 2 as per template provided in the HAND BOOK ON PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATING FOR DEVELOPMENT RESULTS, UNDP).
- **Final evaluation report** – The report of the evaluation will be a stand-alone document that substantiates its recommendations and conclusions as per the above mentioned template. The report will have to provide to the UNDP complete and convincing evidence to support its findings.
- A Power Point Presentation and evaluation brief for dissemination to the stakeholders. For further guidance on the outcome evaluation, please refer to 'Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results' and 'Outcome Level Evaluation Guide' on <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/methodologies.htm>

All above listed deliverables are to be provided in English.

The report will form a basis for learning and reflection on future UNDP programming in Turkmenistan. The report will also serve the accountability of UNDP Turkmenistan on the programme, and will be made available on the internet.

Ethical code of conduct for UNDP evaluations

Evaluations of UNDP-supported activities need to be independent, impartial and rigorous and be guided by Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System. Each evaluation should clearly contribute to learning and accountability. Hence the evaluator must have personal and professional integrity and be guided by propriety in the conduct of business.

8.2 Additional methodology-related documentation

Questionnaire for UNDP senior and programme management

Relevance

- Please demonstrate with specific examples relevance of UNDP DG portfolio support to Turkmenistan National Programme 2030 agenda and governance priorities as articulated in various government development programmes.
- Is the DG portfolio and its projects are flexible enough to respond to emerging national needs?

Effectiveness

- Please assess progress towards the achievement of the DG portfolio expected outcomes. Please substantiate your observations with some examples and data.
- How would you assess UNDP effectiveness in the DG portfolio? Have you achieved all the expected results as they were outlined in UNDAF and CPD/CPA?
- What obstacles did you face and how did you address them?
- What are the measures and indicators of your success in the DG portfolio?
- How did UNDP support capacity development, advocacy on governance issues and policy advisory services in Turkmenistan? What are the key challenges and achievements of UNDP DG portfolio in these areas?
- What was UNDP's role and participation in national debates on national policies on legal reforms and human rights protection? What obstacles did UNDP face and what were its core achievements?
- What are the capacity and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the UNDP governance portfolio?
- To what degree are you satisfied with the contribution of the DG portfolio to achieving UNDAF and CPD/CPA objectives? In your view, what are the most significant results, successes or impacts of the DG portfolio?
- What are the factors that positively or negatively affect the achievement / performance of the DG portfolio – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, risks?
- What are the unanticipated outcomes of the DG portfolio implementation?

Efficiency

- What are the management mechanisms in place to manage a DG portfolio?
- How much time, resources, capacities and effort does it takes to manage the portfolio and what are the gaps, if any?
- How do UNDP practices and policies affect the performance of the portfolio?
- Has UNDP's strategy in producing the outputs and achieving expected outcomes been efficient and cost-effective?
- Does UNDP have an M&E system for its DG portfolio? How does it work? What is its contribution to increasing portfolio efficiency?

Partnership and coordination of development partners

- What is the role of UNDP and other development partners in supporting the governance sector in Turkmenistan?
- Is there a coordination mechanism among donors in DG in place? If yes, how does it work?

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- How does UNDP partner with civil society and private sector in promoting democratic governance in Turkmenistan? What are the key challenges and achievements in partnering with the civil society and business in promoting DG?
- Has UNDP identified and benefited from synergies among UNCT relevant programs and projects to achieve DG objectives?
- What are the comparative advantages of UNDP in the area of DG?

Sustainability

- How does UNDP ensure sustainability of its DG portfolio interventions? Are there mechanisms to ensure sustainability of the governance interventions?
- How did UNDP contribute to human and institutional capacity building of partners to ensure sustainability of its DG portfolio interventions?
- What is the evidence and likelihood that the DG portfolio achievements will be enhanced by national partners and sustained thereafter?

Recommendations for UNDP DG future work

- What are the innovative approaches developed by UNDP DG portfolio that can be replicated/scaled up?
- What are the lessons learned from DG portfolio interventions?
- What are the potential areas/interventions that UNDP can pursue for the next programming cycle in the area of DG?
- What specific interventions can be implemented to strengthen capacity of central authorities, local communities and civil society in improving service delivery in a long term perspective?
- What suggestions can you make to enhance relevance and effectiveness of DG portfolio in the future?
- What suggestions can you make to enhance partnership mechanisms and practices of UNDP DG portfolio in the future?

Questions for Project Managers and staff

- Please describe briefly your project, its key objectives, management and implementation arrangements.
- Please indicate which specific national priorities and UNDAF/CPD objectives it was aligned with.
- Please assess the relevance of your project's outputs and outcomes to achieving DG objectives of UNDAF and CPD. Please provide some examples of your project outcomes.
- Please indicate which project management aspects have worked well and which you feel need improvement.
- Has the Steering Committee met regularly and has it performed according to its TOR? Was it satisfied with the project performance and outcomes?
- Have the project partners as identified in the project document been active in the project?
- How did your project partner with civil society and private sector in promoting democratic governance in Turkmenistan? What are the key challenges and achievements in partnering with the civil society and business in promoting DG?
- Have any had partnership agreements signed (e.g. joint programme arrangements with other UN agencies, cost-sharing / co-financing agreements, partnership support agreements, MOUs, etc)? If so, please identify.

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- Do you have any recommendations for improving the partnership strategies of UNDP in the area of DG?
- How did you monitor and report on your project performance and outcomes (e.g, ATLAS logs, project reports)?
- What are the lessons learned from your project implementation?
- How did your project implementation contribute to achieving DG objectives of UNDAF and CPD? Please be specific.
- What can you recommend UNDP in the area of DG?

Questions for National Partners (in Russian)

Релевантность

- Соответствовало ли содействие и техническая помощь оказанные ПРООН мандату и приоритетам Вашего министерства/организации?
- Достаточно ли гибко реагировало ПРООН на запросы и нужды Вашего министерства/организации?

Результативность

- Достиг ли проект(ы) ПРООН ожидаемых результатов в Вашем министерстве/организации?
- Назовите пожалуйста индикаторы успеха и прогресса в тех областях, где вы сотрудничали с ПРООН?
- Довольны ли Вы поддержкой ПРООН? Пожалуйста, приведите несколько примеров.
- Покрывало ли Ваше сотрудничество с ПРООН вопросы гендерного равенства и расширение возможностей женщин?
- Каков наиболее значимый вклад ПРООН в работу Вашего министерства/организации? Пожалуйста, приведите несколько примеров.
- С какими трудностями столкнулся проект(ы) ПРООН и как они их преодолели?
- Знакомы ли Вы с деятельностью ПРООН в области развития потенциала Вашего министерства (тренинги, консультации, техническая помощь)? Как бы Вы оценили достижения ПРООН в этих областях?
- Известна ли Вам деятельность ПРООН на национальном уровне в области правовой реформы и защиты прав человека? Как бы Вы оценили достижения ПРООН в этих областях?
- Какие положительные или отрицательные факторы повлияли на результативность и эффективность проектов ПРООН?
- Каковы были непредвиденные результаты деятельности ПРООН незапланированные в проектном документе?

Эффективность

- Принимали ли Вы участие в проектных Советах ПРООН? Расскажите пожалуйста об их деятельности и результатах.
- Довольны ли Вы эффективностью поддержки ПРООН Вашему министерству/организации?
- Как внутренние правила и положения ПРООН влияли на эффективность проектов с которыми Вы работали?
- Знакомы ли Вы с системой ПРООН по мониторингу и оценке? Помогла ли она усилить эффективность проектов, которые оказывали поддержку Вашему

министерству/организации?

Партнерство и координация с другими партнерами

- Каковы Ваши впечатления о сотрудничестве ПРООН с другими партнерами по оказанию поддержки Вашему министерству/организации?
- Довольны ли Вы установленными механизмами и процессами координации?
- Каково сравнительное преимущество ПРООН среди других партнеров по оказанию поддержки Вашему министерству/организации?

Устойчивость(устойчивое развитие)

- Как ПРООН обеспечивает устойчивость своего содействия Вашему министерству/организации? Работают ли эти стратегии?
- Будете ли Вы продолжить осуществление мероприятий, которые были поддержаны ПРООН?
- Как ПРООН способствовало повышению потенциала и профессиональному развитию сотрудников Вашего министерства/организации?

Рекомендации по дальнейшей работе с ПРООН

- Существуют ли интересные и инновационные подходы, разработанные и внедренные ПРООН?
- Какие уроки могут быть извлечены из поддержки, оказанной ПРООН Вашему министерству/организации?
- Какие потенциальные сферы/области для сотрудничества с ПРООН в будущем?
- Какие предложения Вы можете внести для повышения релевантности, эффективности и результативности деятельности ПРООН в будущем?
- Что может быть сделано для улучшения механизмов партнерства ПРООН?

8.2 List of individuals/groups interviewed and sites visited

UNDP Turkmenistan - Jacinta Barrins, RR, Lin Cao, DRR; Azat Atajanov, Portfolio Manager; former Project Managers of DG portfolio Jeren Rejepova, Project Manager of “Support to Accounting System Modernization”; Bayram Urazov, National Technical Advisor of project “Social Protection”, Galina Kalagina, participant of international training under the project “SME Development”; Irina Dedova, Project Manager of “Advancement of Social inclusion and integration of persons with disabilities”; Maral Hojammamedova, Project Associate of “Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights”; Hajimurad Pirmuhammedov, former Project Manager of “Civil Service Academy”, “Election” and “Parliament” projects

National Institute for Democracy and Human Rights under the President of Turkmenistan - Shemshat Atayevna Atajanova, Head of Democracy and Human Rights Department.

Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of Turkmenistan - Kurban Nepesov, Head of Department of International Cooperation; Serdar Bazarov, Head of Department of Social Protection

Central Bank of Turkmenistan - Lyale Hudaynazarova, Chief Accountant; Annaoraz Rejepov, Deputy Chairperson of CBT; Muratniyaz Berdiyev, Deputy Chairperson of CBT; Murat Saparov, Head of Department on microeconomic analysis and finance policy.

Central Commission for Elections and Referenda in Turkmenistan - Allaberdy Ussayev, Deputy Chairperson of CEC

Mejlis (Parliament) of Turkmenistan – Gurbangul Bayramova, Deputy Chairperson of Mejlis and Ahmet Charyev, Head of Local Governance Committee

Academy of Civil Service under the President of Turkmenistan - Babahan Aganazarov, Deputy Rector of Academy of Civil Service

Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan - Chary Ovrezov, Chairperson

USAID - Serdar Yagmurov, Project Management Specialist, Economic Development Office

US Embassy - Shan Shi, Second Secretary Political-Economic Section, Embassy of the United States of America

British Embassy - Martin Fenner, Deputy Head of Mission and HM Consul; Natalya Yeskina, Energy and Prosperity Office

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Centre in Ashgabat - Christopher Hornek, Project Co-ordinator; Nana Baramidze, Economic and Environmental Officer

8.4 List of supporting documents reviewed

Freedom House, *Nations in Transit Report*, 2014

Olcott, Martha Brill, Ph.D. *Turkmenistan: Real Energy Giant or Eternal Potential?* James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, December 2013.

OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Turkmenistan Parliamentary Elections*, 15 December 2013

OSCE/ODIHR, *Needs Assessment Mission Report*, 20-23 August 2013

The Government of Turkmenistan and United Nations Development Programme, *Country Programme Action Plan, 2010-2015*

Turkmenistan First Five Year Development Plan, Summary and Extracts, President of Turkmenistan's Programme for social and economic development for the period 2012-2016

Turkmenistan ROAR 2013

Turkmenistan ROAR 2012

UN, *Turkmenistan Country Analysis 2008*, May 2008

United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Turkmenistan, 2010-2015

UNDP, *Human Development Report 2014, Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience, Explanatory note on the 2014 Human Development Report composite indices, Turkmenistan*

UNDP, *Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, Changing with the World: Helping countries to achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion.*

World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/country/turkmenistan>

World Bank Institute, *Worldwide Governance Indicators, Country Data Report for Turkmenistan, 1996-2012*

UNDAF Outcome monitoring matrices and reports

UNDAF consolidated progress reports and monitoring matrices, by outcome

UNDP, *Governance for Sustainable Human Development*, New York, 1997.

United Nations Evaluation Group, *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation*, March 2008

United Nations, *Turkmenistan Country Analysis 2008*

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United Nations Evaluation Group, *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance*, 2011

UNDP, *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*, 2009

UNDP Evaluation Office. 2002. *Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators, Monitoring and Evaluation Companion Series 1*.

Project-Specific Documentation in English and Russian

Strengthening the National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights Project

Strengthening the National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights Project Document

Multiple Minutes of the Steering Committee meetings

EU/UNDP/OHCHR Project Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights, Quarterly Narrative Reports

The Annual Work Plan (AWP) Monitoring Reports

EU Monitoring Report, 2010

EU/UNDP/OHCHR Project, Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights, Interim Annual Reports

Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights

Contract NO. 2008 / 172-286, Final Report for September 2009 – July 2013

UNDP Management Response (and current status of implementation) to the finding of the UNDP Mid-Term Evaluation Report

EU/UNDP/OHCHR Project, Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect human rights, Quarterly Progress Report July-September 2010

Project Quarterly Reports

Žarko Petrović, Strengthening the National Capacity of Turkmenistan to Promote and Protect Human Rights, February 2012

Strengthening the national capacity of Turkmenistan to promote and protect HR project

Final Project Review Report, 2014

Performance Progress Report

Quarterly Progress Reports

Project Completion Report 2014

Annual Work Plans

Enhancing Electoral System and Processes in Turkmenistan

Enhancing Electoral System and Processes in Turkmenistan, project document

Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool, yearly and mid-year reports

Enhancing Electoral System and Processes in Turkmenistan, Lessons Learnt Study, August 2012

Final Review Report

Parliamentary Development Support Programme

Parliamentary Development Support Programme Project Document

Multiple Project Board Meetings minutes

Annual Work Plans

Outcome Evaluation of Democratic Governance Portfolio within UNDP/Turkmenistan Country Programme 2010 – 2015

Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool reports

Enhancing the System of Civil Service in Turkmenistan

Enhancing the System of Civil Service in Turkmenistan, Project Lessons – Learned Report

Final Review Report

Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool, final, yearly and mid-year reports

Minutes of the Project Board

Project Closure Check List

Social Inclusion through Leadership Skills for Disabled Women in Turkmenistan

Project Document

Work Plan 2014-2015

Advancement of social inclusion and integration of PWDs in society

Advancement of social inclusion and integration of PWDs in society Project Board Meetings minutes

Project Document

Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool reports

Final Project Review Report

Support to Social Protection System Development

Support to Social Protection System Development Annual Work Plans

Project Document

Project Board Meetings minutes

Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool reports

Project Lessons – Learned Report

Support to Accounting System Modernization in Turkmenistan

Support to Accounting System Modernization in Turkmenistan Project Document

Project Closure Check List

Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool reports

Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan on SMEs Development

Capacity Building Support for the Government of Turkmenistan on SMEs Development Project Document

Final Project Review Report

Project Lessons – Learned Report

Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool reports

8.5 Summary Table displaying progress towards UNDAF outcomes

UNDAF CPAP Outcomes		
Human Rights and Freedoms	Human Resources Development	Sustainable Economic Management
UNDP contribution		
National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) drafted and submitted to the Government.	The Notional Defined Contribution Pension System introduced and the Pension Fund of Turkmenistan established.	The International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in banking sector introduced.
Increased awareness of Turkmen institutions, relevant stakeholders and public in newly ratified international instruments and HR	Regulatory documents and tools (methods, regulations, instructions, classification) for Pension Fund's operation developed.	IFRS Conversion Guidelines, as well as methodology and instructions developed.
UPR process completed and the Government accepted almost all of its recommendations.	Extensive trainings of public servants in the pension system reforms and management were conducted.	Capacities of banking officials in IFRS knowledge of the financial reporting standards increased through training.
Some legislation aligned with the international treaties.	Capacity of Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan strengthened.	Comprehensive assistance to the Central Bank and local banks in transitioning to IFRS provided.
State officials trained to prepare reports to international HR bodies.	Training of professionals supporting PWDs provided.	Government and private sector representatives increased their knowledge and obtained direct exposure to international best practices in market reforms.
Measurable change in public and decisionmakers' views on HR.	Some PWDs who received the training managed to secure employment.	Targeted training of women entrepreneurs as well as women-members of the Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan provided.
Increased capacities of MPs in lawmaking and developing local socio-economic development plans.	Awareness of general public and stakeholders on challenges of socio-economic integration of PWDs increased.	
Increased capacities of Central Commission for Elections and Referenda in Turkmenistan and regional election commissions.		
Zero Draft of Unified Electoral Code was developed.		
Improved election management procedures.		
Enhanced institutional capacity of the Academy of Civil Service and increased		

Outcome Evaluation of Democratic Governance Portfolio within UNDP/Turkmenistan Country Programme 2010 – 2015

staff and students' knowledge in such areas as governance, public management and administration.		
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8.6 Short biography of the evaluator

**Arkadi Toritsyn, Ph.D.
Canada**

A US-trained public policy expert with a doctorate in Public Policy from Rutgers University, NJ, USA, with more than 15 years of experience advising governments and donors on policy and project development and evaluation. Is employed by the Government of Ontario, Canada where he develops, implements and evaluates policies and projects promoting rights of children with disabilities. Received the highest honour of the Ontario Government for interministerial efforts promoting rights of children with autism in 2012.

Is included into multiple vetted expert rosters such as UNDP ECIS rosters in democratic governance; poverty alleviation; monitoring and evaluation; UN Women, Central and Southeastern Europe (CSEE) Sub-regional roster as well as global Human Development Report Office roster and BDP roster on democratic governance as well as OSCE evaluators' roster. Is well familiar with UN evaluation standards.

Evaluated numerous UNCT joint projects, UNDP COs portfolios, programmes and projects and UNICEF projects in Europe and CIS and the Asia Pacific region. Has country experience in Uzbekistan, Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine, Poland, Montenegro, Turkmenistan, Thailand, and Vietnam. Has solid international experience and skills in preparing high quality analytical reports, primers, guides, programme and project proposals for UN system.

Has solid understanding of development challenges in Central Asia acquired through evaluation of a number of poverty alleviation and democratic governance programmes and projects in Uzbekistan and disability legislative and policy advisory work in Turkmenistan and contributing to NHDR in Kyrgyzstan.