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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to present the Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in the Republic of Armenia. This is the first ADR assessment of UNDP's contribution to Armenia, and it covers the period 2005–2013. Specifically, the ADR covers the previous country programme, 2005–2009, and the ongoing programme, 2010–2015.

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to profound economic and societal changes in Armenia. Since the country's independence in 1991, UNDP's programme in Armenia has been closely aligned with national plans and priorities and also with UNDP's mandate to support human development and address poverty and inequalities.

The evaluation found that since 2005, UNDP has enjoyed a high profile in Armenia, especially in supporting the formulation and reform of national public policies, developing and strengthening national institutions and democratic mechanisms of participatory decision-making, and piloting new models of innovative solutions. During the assessment period, UNDP also made significant contributions to help Armenia respond to the needs of vulnerable groups through its work on human rights protection, gender equality and HIV/AIDS. Moreover, UNDP has helped the country fight human and drug trafficking and build a functioning disaster risk reduction system.

Moving forward, UNDP is considered to be strategically positioned to support Armenia's development and to help the Government coordinate and further leverage international development efforts in the country. To increase UNDP's strategic contributions, the evaluation suggests that UNDP's next programme should focus on fewer, more strategically targeted outcomes, leveraging synergies among thematic areas and strategic initiatives.

The evaluation also notes that UNDP should pay particular attention to improving results-based management and monitoring and evaluation. It also recommends that UNDP work to better document and disseminate its lessons learned in programme approaches and initiatives, particularly the pilot ones. UNDP Armenia should also strive to adopt a more holistic, sustained, long-term and multipronged approach to more fully and explicitly mainstream gender equality for transformative results, and include disaster risk reduction components in all areas of work.

These conclusions and recommendations were presented at a stakeholder workshop in Yerevan on 15 October 2014. Over 70 stakeholders attended the workshop to discuss the evaluation and the management response provided by UNDP Armenia on the role and future contribution of UNDP in the context of the next country programme, 2016–2020.

It is now my pleasure to make the ADR report available to the Government of Armenia as it engages with UNDP in the development of the new county programme and to the UNDP Executive Board as it reviews the next Country Programme Document.
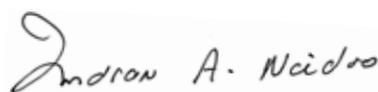
Indran Naidoo
Director
Independent Evaluation Office

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARV	Antiretroviral therapy
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CFC	Chlorofluorocarbons
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DRM	Disaster risk management
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GII	Gender inequality index
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
HRDO	Human Rights Defender's Office
IBM	Integrated Border Management initiative
LLL	Life-long learning
NCAP	National Centre on AIDS Prevention
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PET	Polyethylene terephthalate
PDSP	Prospective Development Strategic Programme
PPP	Public-private partnership
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RBEC	Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
SDP	Sustainable Development Programme
SMEs	Small and medium-size enterprises
UN	United Nations
UNCAC	United Nations Convention Against Corruption
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNHRO	United Nations Human Rights Office
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Vocational education training
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Assessment of Development Results (ADR) for Armenia was conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2014. The evaluation assesses UNDP's performance and its contributions to development outcomes in Armenia between 2005 and 2013. The ADR provides recommendations for UNDP's future strategic positioning in Armenia and its new Country Programme Document.

The analysis of development results for each thematic area used relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability as evaluation criteria. UNDP's strategic positioning was analysed in terms of strategic relevance, capacity to respond to national demands while addressing UNDP's mandate, value added, comparative advantages, competitive advantages, promotion of United Nations (UN) values and contribution to the coordination of the UN system.

The assessment adopted a multi-method approach to data collection and analysis. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Triangulation techniques were employed for various sources of information and methods, in addition to verification and validation methods, such as internal team meetings and discussion of the preliminary results with two groups: UNDP staff and a national reference group.

KEY FINDINGS

Overall, UNDP initiatives have been relevant to Armenia's development and have been aligned with national needs, government priorities and UNDP's mandate. Initiatives have been efficiently implemented and most outputs have been timely delivered with adequate quality. Most outcomes are considered sustainable. There is strong national ownership of results and local

capacity has been enhanced. Support for the continuation of UNDP-implemented initiatives and achieved results, demonstrated through changes in legislation and regulations, is also high. Country-led approaches have been particularly relevant to promoting shared accountability between the Government and civil society and to fostering sustainability and national ownership of results.

UNDP has been most effective in (i) supporting formulation or reform of national policies and strategies, (ii) developing and strengthening national institutional capacities, (iii) implementing large and complex projects, (iv) administering resources and (v) piloting innovative solutions. Some of the most significant contributions are highlighted below.

UNDP's contributions to poverty reduction and support to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have helped to strengthen regulatory frameworks and mechanisms to establish and revitalize small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs). UNDP support has also strengthened national and local capacities to develop and implement innovative and diversified income-generating policies and practices targeting vulnerable groups, with the aim of reducing inequalities.

UNDP has been successful in engaging civil society organizations and private stakeholders in discussions about vocational education training (VET), public-private partnership (PPP) and corporate social responsibility (CSR). A law on VET was developed and submitted to the Government. The Government amended the employment law to enable rural youth to become eligible for free enrolment in pubic VET training and retraining programmes and reformed the education policy. The Government also revised the CSR and PPP concepts and legal acts. A

number of strategy documents and policies that UNDP helped develop are fostering inclusive growth, such as the National Strategy on SME Development and a national diaspora partnership, which the Government has taken ownership of and implemented. UNDP also contributed to strengthening the capacities of relevant institutions to support SMEs development at national and local levels. There are signs of an increasingly improved environment to foster trade among regions and an improved system of agricultural produce realization, with established market chains.

UNDP has effectively contributed to the strengthening of capacities in data collection and data systematization through joint work with the Government on the development of indicators for the communities database. UNDP supported the development of a unified community database that informs national and regional-level decision-making processes in addition to the ArmInfo database, which tracks progress towards achieving the MDGs and monitors commitments to human development.

UNDP has been effective in helping the Government to strengthen capacities at community, regional and national levels of government for decentralization, planning, management, delivery of public goods and services, and monitoring the implementation of social policies. The Government Effectiveness Index (percentile rank 0–100) showed some improvement over a five-year period (2008–2012), increasing from 46.4 to 54.5; however, it is still behind the 2015 target of 71.5 set by UNDP. At the current pace, it is unlikely the target will be achieved on time.

UNDP's contributions to democratic governance have helped to strengthen institutional capacities and mechanisms to address human rights issues. UNDP has helped empower people living with HIV to claim their rights and fight stigma. It has also promoted participatory decision-making at the local level and supported youth participation in policymaking.

UNDP has effectively contributed to human rights in the following broad areas: the fights against human trafficking, drug trafficking, and corruption, and the fight for gender equality. Significant contributions include:

- strengthening the capacities of the Human Rights Defender's Office

- raising awareness of human rights among civil servants

- increasing capacities to combat drug and human trafficking and to assist victims

- improving legislative framework on gender equality and the capacities of women to engage in local-level decision-making processes

- contributing to an anti-corruption strategy by supporting the drafting of legislation and ensuring compliance with the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)

Under gender equality and women's empowerment, UNDP has effectively contributed to the development of the State Gender Policy Concept and the Law on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities. It has also strengthened the capacities of the National Institute of Labour and Social Research, and helped to integrate gender in civil servant curricula and to empower women and increase their engagement in decision-making processes. UNDP has also contributed significantly to empowering and building the capacity of women to run for local offices.

There is a growing effort to mainstream the gender perspective in UNDP programmes. However, gender mainstreaming is at times perceived as contrived and minimalistic — an additional layer of requirements and generally considered last. UNDP Armenia still lacks a clear strategy with a theory of change for how addressing gender could effectively fast track development. The UNDP strategy does not clearly indicate how it would improve and generate not only gender-responsive but gender-transformative results that can address cultural roles, stereotypes and power structures.

UNDP has been particularly effective in increasing youth participation in decision-making processes. A UNDP-supported National Youth Aspirations Survey became a crucial part of the Armenian National Youth Report 2011. The report fed the development of the National Youth Strategy 2013–2017, which was also developed with UNDP support. UNDP played a crucial role in establishing the Youth Research Institute in 2013. The institute should contribute to evidence-based and participatory youth policymaking. UNDP is currently involved in drafting the new Youth Policy Concept. A factor contributing to the success of UNDP's support to the Government of Armenia was UNDP's ability to flexibly respond to the Government's need for policy advice with high-quality expertise.

Initiatives in mine action have also been relevant and are in line with UNDP's mandate and the local population's need to live in a safe environment with access to productive sources of income, such as pastures and croplands. UNDP has built the capacity of deminers and the Armenian Red Cross in humanitarian demining activities, provided information on contaminated areas through the Landmine Impact Survey, promoted awareness of affected communities about mine risks, and improved access of farmers to agricultural lands as a result of demining activities in Shurnukh community of Syunik region.

In the area of disaster risk reduction (DRR), UNDP helped to build a functioning DRR system in Armenia, at both national and local levels. However, DRR has not yet been fully mainstreamed in government strategies and plans. The Government increasingly recognizes the importance of DRR, as evident in its establishment of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and its national platform to address emergencies, and in its reporting on the implementation of Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).

Overall, UNDP's contributions to environment and sustainable development progressed towards frameworks for strengthening environmental management. On ozone layer protection, UNDP enabled the Government to meet its commitments under the Montreal Protocol on the phase out of chlorofluorocarbons. With UNDP's assistance, Armenia submitted its second National Communications report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2010 and prepared a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory under Article 4.1 of the UNFCCC. Furthermore, UNDP helped the Government to implement the requirements of the Convention on Biological Diversity. With UNDP's financial and technical support, Armenia's protected areas system was expanded by 38,828 hectares. The Law on Specially Protected Natural Areas was fully revised to enable communities to participate in protected areas management. Additionally, UNDP assisted the management of three newly established protected areas in the development of guidelines and norms, and in the development of protected area management models and business plans. In water ecosystems, UNDP promoted cooperation of the concerned countries on trans-boundary degradation of the Kura-Araks river basin.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1. The Government of Armenia and civil society consider UNDP a reliable and responsive development partner. UNDP is considered relevant and strategically positioned to support Armenia's development thanks to its strong relationship with the Government, its long-term engagement with key civil society organizations, its effective outreach to local governments and communities through project presence, and its unique convening power to foster dialogue on key and sensitive development issues.

Conclusion 2. UNDP has made relevant contributions to national development outcomes as planned in the Country Programme Documents (CPD I 2005–2009 and CPD II 2010–2015). Most significant contributions are linked to the support provided to the Government, civil society and private sector to promote democratic

participatory decision-making, strengthen institutions and regulatory frameworks, and implement national policies and programmes to reduce disparities.

Conclusion 3. UNDP has generally engaged and worked well with national stakeholders. However, it is well positioned to promote more frequent and inclusive consultation, particularly with government counterparts, to better help the Government coordinate and leverage international development efforts.

Conclusion 4. From 2005 to 2015, UNDP was expected to contribute to 18 outcomes with several projects and outputs. The excessive number of initiatives presents a major challenge for a Country Office with a limited number of staff and scarce resources for comprehensive implementation, synergic cross-practice collaboration, and adequate monitoring and evaluation.

Conclusion 5. There is great potential to further leverage the Integrated Border Management (IBM) initiatives to promote stronger programmatic synergies in other development areas, such as trade, local development, poverty reduction, human rights, migration and good relations with neighbouring countries. Its programmatic potential has not been fully explored.

Conclusion 6. UNDP has not fully distilled and disseminated lessons from achievements, innovations and challenges in developing pilot programmes and testing new approaches. Nor has it fully distilled and disseminated lessons on how these approaches can affect or enhance development policies, knowledge management and learning. These lessons could be useful for scaling up and replication of programmes and approaches.

Conclusion 7. UNDP has successfully supported national efforts to address gender inequality at a policy level in Armenia and has progressed in mainstreaming a gender-responsive and human-rights-based approach in its programming. However, some corporate benchmarks still require actions and focus on transformational change.

Conclusion 8. UNDP has mainstreamed disaster risk reduction in the area of environment and sustainable development well, but further mainstreaming is needed across all UNDP initiatives in Armenia.

Conclusion 9. Despite significant efforts, results-based management and outcome monitoring and evaluation could better and more timely feed into decision-making, learning and course corrections, and could more strategically contribute to outcome-level development results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: UNDP should hold further discussions with government stakeholders to redefine a more consultative relationship with regard to strategically prioritizing resources and identifying and selecting programme themes and beneficiaries. Equally important would be to define with the Government ways to ensure that UNDP's neutrality, efficiency and effectiveness are not compromised. This may require putting in place mechanisms to allow UNDP the flexibility needed to foster innovation, ensure value for money, and make timely and efficient contributions to sustainable development.

Management Response: *Since 2005, UNDP benefitted from a system of National Directors at Deputy Ministerial level for each portfolio, who provide overall guidance and coordination of UNDP projects and programmes, aimed at promoting stronger national ownership. This approach is currently under revision by the Country Office as in some portfolios one Ministry does not have the mandate for the range of activities, such as democratic governance that covers many areas and issues. As UNDP's programming becomes more cross-cutting, and as the programme aligns to the new UNDP Strategic Plan, so the traditional portfolio boundaries are also becoming blurred. Discussion will be held going forward to balance consultation with the necessary flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness of UNDP. The ongoing UNDAF and CPD preparation process, which includes the strategic prioritization of resources and programme*

themes, is being coordinated with the Government. Government Ministries are also encouraged to take more responsibility for donor coordination, and to attend the respective donor coordination meetings which are currently organized by the UN.

Recommendation 2: UNDP Armenia should develop the next programme with a focus on fewer and more specific, realistic and strategically targeted outcomes, narrowing the range of activities accordingly. UNDP should prioritize initiatives in which it can bring added value and in which costs can be shared by strategic national partners to ensure national ownership and sustainability of results.

Management Response: *As per new Country Programme Document (CPD) guidelines, the number of outcomes is reduced to four so this point will be addressed in the preparation of the next CPD, which will be aligned with the new UNDP Strategic Plan. The areas of cooperation will be based on country needs and UNDP comparative advantage.*

Recommendation 3: UNDP should further capitalize on the opportunities offered by IBM initiatives. It should develop a well-articulated strategy, in close cooperation with the National Security Council and other stakeholders, to leverage synergies with interrelated development issues and diversify funding sources with a conscious technical and value-for-money strategy.

Management Response: *The Country Office is beginning to explore ways to link the IBM work with other portfolios, for example in mainstreaming energy efficiency construction practices and bringing experts to look at the feasibility of providing energy supply to communities near the border crossing.*

Recommendation 4: UNDP should make further efforts to effectively document and disseminate its successful experiences and lessons learned in programme approaches and initiatives, particularly the successful pilot ones.

Management Response: *The Country Office is attempting to do this through the diversification*

of UNDP communications, public outreach and strengthened knowledge management. Some projects are trying, for the first time, to prototype ideas early in the development programme and project cycle in order to test, and prove, what works and what can then be scaled up. Kolba, UNDP Armenia's innovations lab, is responsible for experimentation in new approaches to development assistance and for working with other projects and programmes to integrate these new approaches. Lessons learned from experiments/pilots and UNDP Armenia's broader programmes are disseminated in multimedia communications. The Communications Associate will be working more closely with the RBM focal point, Kolba and Programme teams to link corporate learning, capacity development, RBM, innovation and knowledge management. The use of conventional media tools, such as press releases, news articles and success stories, audio-video materials, has been augmented by non-conventional media tools, such as websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Recommendation 5: UNDP Armenia should strive to adopt a more holistic, sustained, long-term and multipronged approach in order to more fully and explicitly integrate gender equality components into all areas of work. UNDP Armenia should focus not only on gender-responsive, but on gender-transformative contributions that can fast-track development and address power relations and cultural structures.

Management Response: *The Country Office Gender Mainstreaming Strategy is currently being updated by the Country Office to align to new approaches in the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and new Strategic Plan.*

Recommendation 6: As Armenia is a country prone to disasters, UNDP should explore how to further integrate and mainstream DRR into all its programmes and initiatives.

Management Response: *UNDP Armenia will update the project review procedure to ensure DRR is mainstreamed into projects, with clear criteria and indicators. All areas of work proposed in UNDP's new Strategic Plan are aimed at building resilience*

whether, for instance, through greater employment and livelihoods, more equitable access to resources, better protection against economic and environmental shocks – so this recommendation will be implemented as the Country Office aligns its programmes and planning to the new Strategic Plan.

Recommendation 7: UNDP should further improve results-based management and monitoring and evaluation of the programme at the outcome level, and work with coherent and comprehensive theories of change to map assumptions and ensure complex contexts and the multifaceted nature of development are considered to contribute to development, behavioural and transformational change.

Management Response: *It is noted that outcome evaluations are costly and resources need to be available to fully implement this recommendation. Monitoring and reporting will increase efforts to produce and use evidence based data focused on outcomes to cover learning and accountability; and the feasibility of strengthening RBM and increasing the number of evaluations will be further discussed during CPD design.*

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted an Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in Armenia in 2014. An ADR is an independent country-level evaluation aimed at measuring UNDP's contribution to development results and its strategic positioning in the country. This introductory chapter presents the purpose and scope of the evaluation, and an overview of the structure of the report.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the ADR is to support UNDP's accountability to its Executive Board, stakeholders, partners in country and the public, as well as to contribute to improvements in UNDP's future strategies and programmes in the countries and its thematic and global knowledge. The Armenia ADR is made available to UNDP's Executive Board, relevant UNDP offices and a wide range of stakeholders and partners in Armenia. In line with UNDP's Evaluation Policy, the ADR report is also made publicly accessible on the IEO website.

The objectives of the Armenia ADR are to:

- Capture evaluative evidence of UNDP's contributions to development results in Armenia during the programme cycles of 2005–2009 and 2010–2015

- Draw on the evidence to assess the contribution of UNDP's programme activities to human development in Armenia and the well-being of its people, focusing on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the programme activities in achieving intended programme outcomes, and the potential sustainability of the results achieved by the initiatives promoted

- Further analyse evidence and assess the strategic positioning and approaches that UNDP has taken, focusing on synergies with national development strategies and priorities, values espoused by the United Nations (UN) and the comparative strength of UNDP as an organization

- Draw general conclusions aimed at addressing the main challenges identified to strengthen UNDP's contribution to national development results. They are presented so as to help UNDP facilitate further multi-stakeholder consultations, and to generate options or alternatives for future programme improvement

1.2 SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The ADR covers a nine-year period from 2005 to 2013, guided by UNDP Armenia's Country Programme Document (CPD) 2005-2009 and CPD 2010-2015. Between the two periods, there is a large degree of coherence in the programme structure and continuity in many projects. Therefore, the assessment is not presented with two distinct programme frameworks, but as a continuous programme using the structure of the current country programme for presentation purpose.

Among the Government's key documents and strategic plans for this period are the country's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Armenia Development Strategy 2013-2025. The assessment also takes account of the national priorities identified in the two United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF), 2005–2009 and 2010–2015.

The ADR's geographic scope covers actions across the country or parts of the national territory. The ADR is both retrospective and prospective. Retrospectively, the ADR assesses UNDP's contribution to the national efforts in addressing development challenges in four thematic/ programmatic areas: poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); disasters, crisis prevention and recovery; democratic governance; and environment and sustainable development. The ADR draws conclusions about UNDP's overall performance and about each of the country programme outcomes. It assesses results, anticipated and unanticipated, positive and negative, and covers UNDP assistance funded from both core and non-core resources. The evaluation also looks ahead to examine how UNDP can support Armenia's development in the next programming cycle, 2015–2019.

During the two evaluated cycles, UNDP's programme in Armenia implemented initiatives worth $67.3 million. UNDP funded 15 percent of the programmes in 2004–2014, while the Government of Armenia and external donors financed 38 percent and 47 percent respectively. The programme has seen a significant budget increase in 2013, from an average of $7.8 million in 2005–2012 to $23.4 million in 2013. (The reasons for this increase are discussed in Chapter 3.) During this period, 108 projects were implemented, 42 of which are ongoing. The country had an average of 39 active projects per year during the evaluation period.

1.3 METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The methodology follows the 'ADR Method Manual' (January 2011) guidelines, ensuring both methodological rigour and comparability of ADRs in countries and regions where UNDP operates.

The assessment involved collection of evidence of expected results (outcomes) versus the achieved and/or unexpected results, as well as UNDP's

ability to respond to the challenges, priorities and changing context of the country. The analysis follows a logical sequence, starting with the definition of criteria and subcriteria guiding the evaluation questions, and concluding with recommendations.

The evaluation has two main components: (a) the analysis of UNDP's contribution to development results through its programme outcomes, and (b) the strategy UNDP has adopted to enhance its contribution to development results in Armenia. For each component, the ADR presents its findings and assessment according to the set criteria provided below. Further elaboration of the criteria is found in 'ADR Manual 2011'.

UNDP's contribution by thematic/programmatic areas. UNDP's contributions through its programme activities to development results in Armenia are analysed. The analysis is presented by thematic/programme areas and according to the following criteria:

- Relevance of UNDP's projects and outcomes to the country's needs and national priorities

- Effectiveness of UNDP interventions in terms of achieving intended programme outcomes

- Efficiency of UNDP's interventions in terms of use of human and financial resources

- Sustainability of the results to which UNDP contributed

UNDP's contribution through its strategic positioning. UNDP's positioning and strategies are analysed both from the perspective of the organization's mandate[1] and from the perspective of Armenia's development needs and priorities as agreed and as they emerged. This entails systematic analyses of UNDP's place and niche within the development and policy space in the country, as well as strategies used by UNDP to maximize its contribution through adopting relevant

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1   For UNDP's Strategic Plan, see www.undp.org/execbrd/pdf/dp07-43Rev1.pdf.

strategies and approaches. The following criteria are applied:

- Relevance and responsiveness of the country programme as a whole to the challenges and needs of the country

- Use of UNDP's comparative strengths and competitive strengths

- Promoting UN values from a human development perspective

The ADR pays specific attention to UNDP's support to furthering gender equality and women's empowerment in Armenia, consistent with the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP).[2] The evaluation will systematically assess how gender is mainstreamed in UNDP's programme support and how advocacy efforts helped to further gender equality and women's empowerment.

The evaluation criteria formed the basis of the ADR methodological process. In addition to assessments using the criteria above, the ADR process also identifies how various factors (which focus on the *means*) have influenced UNDP's performance. Factors considered in this ADR are:

- National context, political environment and relations with neighbouring countries

- National ownership of development initiatives and results, and use of national capacities

- Lower-middle-income country status

- Gender equality and women's empowerment as preconditions for sustainable human development

- South-South/East-East solutions and cooperation

- Management, including programme management, human resource management and financial management

Evaluators assessed the programmes against the criteria, generated findings and came to broad conclusions that support recommendations for future action.

The evaluation studied all projects, but selected an illustrative sample of projects from each outcome and country programme cycle for in-depth review to assess factors that contributed to or impeded effective contribution to sustainable outcomes. The sample selection included:

- Coverage of the two programme cycles (taking into account closed and ongoing projects)

- Geographical coverage (national, provincial and municipal levels and regional programmes)

- Thematic areas (poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs, democratic governance, environment and sustainable development, and disaster and crisis prevention and recovery)

- External activities that intersect with various subject areas

- Budget execution (small and large projects)

- Execution model (national execution/implementation and direct execution/implementation by UNDP)

The evaluation team collected information and data from programme and project progress documents, focus groups and semi-structured interviews with actors involved in the implementation of projects and activities in the Government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, and current and former UNDP staff (Annex 3). The evaluation team conducted over

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2　See the UN system-wide action plan to improve gender equality and the empowerment of women across the UN system, available at www.unwomen.org/~/media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/How%20We%20Work/UNSystemCoordination/UN-SWAP-Framework-Dec-2012.pdf

250 interviews with senior government officials and leaders in the thematic areas, and with strategic partners and beneficiaries. The interviews followed a protocol developed by the evaluation team that focused on assessing UNDP's strategic positioning and the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP's contributions to development. Field visits to projects and activities were conducted in Yerevan, Tavush, Shirak, Lori, Armavir and Ararat, to consult with local beneficiaries and partners.

In addition to UNDP programme and project documents, the evaluation team also reviewed the evaluation and progress reports and the Armenian Government's strategic and programmatic documents. The main secondary sources were evaluations and studies conducted by independent consultants and other international bodies and government agencies, as well as academic studies on the thematic areas examined. Finally, the evaluation team used press material and statistical data from government agencies and specialized bodies.

The assessment sought to identify whether and to what extent UNDP's performance contributed to project and programme results — expected or unexpected — in the short and medium terms. UNDP's role and other factors were also identified and analysed to assess the extent to which UNDP's contributions were effective. The evaluation sought to answer how and why UNDP has contributed to the development of Armenia.

The analysis of the strategic positioning of UNDP Armenia as a development partner sought to understand its role in policy formulation and in building an institutional culture. The integration of the analysis also means that UNDP portfolio projects, although analysed separately, will be combined with an assessment of UNDP responses to priorities and the country's development challenges.

The analysis drew on evidence triangulated from different methods of data collection and analysis in order to ensure the robustness of the findings.

There was difficulty in locating some informants, past UNDP employees and government managers because of turnover. However, the team was largely able to interview key informants in all analysed areas and thereby ensure appropriate coverage and quality of the gathered information.

1.4 THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The first stage of the evaluation process consisted of a preparatory mission to Armenia in January 2014 by the IEO ADR evaluation manager to discuss the ADR process with the UNDP Country Office and key national partners. During this mission, a group of government, civil society, private sector, academia and donor representatives were selected to participate in a national reference group to review and contribute to the evaluation while safeguarding the independence of the exercise and assuring the quality of its products.

The next step consisted of fieldwork and data collection, particularly interviews, most of which were held in Yerevan. April and May were devoted to data collection, document analysis and triangulation of information from different sources. During the analysis mission to Yerevan in May, the evaluation team discussed the results of data collection. The main findings were presented to and discussed with UNDP Armenia and the national reference group. The last stage of this work focused on developing the evaluation report with appropriate quality checks and reviews for methodological consistence. The IEO team, the Regional Bureau for Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC), UNDP Armenia, the national reference group, the Government of Armenia, two independent external reviewers, one member of IEO's advisory board of lead evaluation experts, the IEO evaluation adviser coordinating all ADRs and IEO's Director all provided input.

The semi-final version of this document was also discussed in a stakeholder's workshop in Yerevan at the end of the exercise, where the results were

presented and validated together with a draft of the management response from the Armenia Country Office.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report has six chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 describes the context in which UNDP has been working for the last decade and describes the challenges it has faced. Chapter 3 outlines UN and UNDP strategies to respond to these challenges. It also details UNDP's programmatic response. Chapter 4 analyses the findings from the perspective of UNDP's contribution to development. Chapter 5 analyses the findings from the perspective of UNDP's strategic positioning in Armenia. Finally, Chapter 6 offers conclusions on the main findings of the evaluation, as well as recommendations to contribute to UNDP's future programmes and their implementation in Armenia. The main report is followed by annexes comprising the terms of reference for the evaluation, UNDP's programme results matrix, a list of people consulted, a list of documents consulted and the management response.

Chapter 2

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES AND NATIONAL STRATEGIES

This chapter describes the country context and the national development challenges of Armenia from a human development perspective. Its aim is to help readers understand, in subsequent chapters, why UNDP has taken certain strategic positions and implemented certain programmes in the light of the development challenges of the country. It also explains how UNDP's strategic position has related to the Government's development strategies and overall external assistance and whether UNDP's strategic position and programmes have actually addressed Armenia's development challenges. The country's development context and status thus become an important benchmark against which UNDP's strategic positioning and development results are mapped.

2.1 COUNTRY CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

The Republic of Armenia is a lower-middle-income country, landlocked in the southern Caucasus at the juncture between Europe and Asia. It is bordered by Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran and Turkey.

The population of Armenia is 3.02 million. The country is composed of Yerevan city and 10 regions, which are further split into 915 communities. The urban and rural populations make up 63.3 percent and 36.7 percent of the population respectively.

Armenia first became independent in 1918. In 1922, it became part of the Soviet Union; it declared its independence last in 1991, becoming a unitary, multi-party, democratic nation-state.

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to profound economic and societal changes in Armenia. Almost immediately after gaining independence, Armenia entered a period of economic and social crisis resulting in the mass impoverishment of the population.

During the first decade of independence, high unemployment forced a quarter of the population to leave Armenia in search of jobs and better living conditions. Until the end of 2003, approximately half of the country's population was still poor.

The 2009 economic crisis also had a serious impact on the incidence of poverty in Armenia. Despite some economic progress, in 2013 nearly one third of the population was living in poverty. The poor still rely significantly on fiscal transfers and private remittances. Unemployment affects a significant portion of the labour force, with rates especially high outside the capital and among youth.

Armenia is characterized by elevated disparities among regions and specific vulnerable groups. This is reflected in the Gini index,[3] which was 0.372 in 2012.[4] There are significant differences among the 10 regions of the country as well. The proportion of the poor ranges from 20.7 percent in the Vayotz Dzor region to 46 percent in the Shirak region, where a devastating earthquake hit in 1988.

Poverty incidences are higher among specific vulnerable groups that suffered adverse impacts of natural (earthquake) and man-made (landmines) disasters. The civil war in Syria, which

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3   Gini index of 0 represents perfect equality, while an index of 1 implies perfect inequality.

4   National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, available at www.armstat.am/en/.

started in 2012, triggered the influx of over 10,500 ethnic Armenian refugees into Armenia.[5] These Syrian-Armenians face issues with resettlement, finding income-earning opportunities and integrating with the rest of the society.[6]

Another marginalized group lives in areas along the border with Azerbaijan.[7] Additional threats to the population stem from landmines and unexploded ordinances in the border regions in and around Nagorno Karabakh.

Although poverty rates do not drastically differ between men and women,[8] women still constitute a vulnerable group due to gender disparities in the labour market, limited access to collateral and property rights, and paucity of education and training opportunities.

The unemployment rate among young people aged 15–24 years in 2012 was the highest among the economically active population, followed by people aged 25–29 years. High unemployment among youth can be partly explained by an underdeveloped job market, insufficient experience and inadequate skills of young people, and partly by businesses' unwillingness to employ inexperienced youth.

The high level of youth unemployment reinforced the need for political attention to vocational education training (VET) and continuing education to ensure the availability of a competitive and qualified workforce. Progress has been made in developing new educational standards and relevant curricula, responding to job market needs, and increasing the representation of social partners and local employment agencies in the governing boards of VET institutions. Nevertheless, Armenia has not yet seen a significant change in unemployment numbers.

Despite some improvements related to gender equality, Armenia still ranks 115th in political empowerment of women and 131th in health and survival of women (out of 136 studied countries).[9] However, the gender inequality index (GII) in 2010 indicates improvement, with a GII value of 0.34 in 2012, as compared to 0.4 in 2005.[10]

Decentralizing power by strengthening local governance institutions is the strategy for addressing regional disparities and the capacities of local governance institutions to deliver services to vulnerable populations. The introduction of strategic planning and performance budgeting at the municipal level has enhanced planning and monitoring capacities of elected officials and promoted transparency and accountability in public service delivery. The ongoing decentralization reforms, the establishment of inter-community unions and consolidation of communities in several areas of the country demonstrated increased effectiveness and efficiency of the provided services[11] to vulnerable groups.

There has been improvement in fighting corruption: Armenia moved from 105th to 94th place in the Transparency International Corruption Index, with the value improving from 34 in 2005

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5   Ministry of Diaspora, available at www.mindiaspora.am – number of Syrian Armenians who got Armenian citizenship.

6   Armen Press (Armenian News Agency), 'French parliamentarians visit Gyumri on 25th earthquake anniversary', 7 December 20013, available at http://armenpress.am/eng/news/742943/french-parliamentarians-visit-gyumri-on-25th-earthquake-anniversary.html.

7   UNDP, 'Landmine Impact Survey', 2005.

8   In 2012, the proportion of the poor among men and women was 32.2 percent and 32.6 percent respectively. The difference was also insignificant for the year 2008.

9   World Economic Forum, 'The Global Gender Gap Report 2013'.

10   Human Development Report 1980-2012, available at knoema.com/HDR2013/human-development-report-1980-2012?tsId=1006660.

11   Municipal governments are expected to consolidate/raise their own resources and become less dependent on transfers from the central Government.

to 36 in 2013.[12] Similar progress is documented in combating human trafficking. Armenia has graduated in status to a country whose Government fully complies with the US Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards.

Armenia is prone to a variety of natural disasters, which places 80 percent of its inhabitants at high risk of exposure to catastrophic events.[13] This risk was exemplified in 1988 when a powerful earthquake killed 25,000 and left about half a million people homeless. It had a high economic toll as well, with direct economic losses amounting to about $14.2 billion.[14] Anthropogenic impacts on the environment have greatly raised the hazard of natural disasters. Leaking irrigation channels and forest-clearing activities trigger landslides; inappropriate agricultural practices contribute to erosion; and greenhouse gas emissions globally result in increased temperatures,[15] which negatively affect the availability of water resources in Armenia, and eventually, agricultural output and food security.

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction 2009 Global Assessment Report included Armenia in the groups of countries with the highest relative economic loss and the worse economic resilience to natural hazards. The annual cost of damage caused by hydro-meteorological events is estimated at $120 million,[16] which was about five percent of the state's budget in 2013. Landslides, mudflows, droughts, hail and floods account for the major economic losses.

A number of man-made hazards are present in Armenia as well. The location of Armenia's nuclear power plant in a high-seismic zone, and its proximity to the capital city, make it a technological hazard.[17] Moreover, Armenia is home to 26 hazardous chemical production facilities and 1,500 enterprises prone to explosions and fire.[18] However, according to the Government, the Atomic Energy Agency inspects the nuclear power plant annually and reports that the plant is within an acceptable level of risk to the environment.

Additional threats to the population stem from landmines and unexploded ordnances in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Landmines were placed in large numbers along the border and in vicinities of bordering communities of both Azerbaijan and Armenia.[19] The contamination is mainly in rural areas, preventing full utilization of pasture and agricultural land by the communities. The Landmine Impact Survey conducted by UNDP in 2005 identified 380 victims and at least 60 communities affected by landmines and unexploded ordnances.[20]

There has been some progress in disaster management in at-risk communities contaminated with landmines and unexploded ordnances: the number of casualties has been declining since 2005. One community in the Syunik region was cleared from

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12   Transparency International, available at cpi.transparency.org/cpi2013/.

13   UNISDR, 'Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction', 2009.

14   Government of Armenia, 'Disaster Risk Reduction National Strategy of the Republic of Armenia', March 2012.

15   Meteorological data show an increase of temperatures in Armenia by 0.85 degrees and decrease of precipitation by 6 percent over the last 80 years.

16   Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, 'Armenia: Institutional Arrangements for Disaster Risk Management and Reduction', October 2009.

17   UNDP, Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Capacity Development Group, 'Armenia Disaster Risk Reduction System Capacity Development Report', February 2010.

18   EU-funded Programme for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Man-made and Natural Disasters in the ENPI East Region (PPRD East), 'Technical Report 4: Strengthening the Eastern Region's Institutional and Legislative Frameworks', 'Together Against Disasters', January 2014.

19   'Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor', 2006, available at www.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?url=lm/2006/armenia.html.

20   UNDP Armenia Humanitarian Demining Project, 'Landmine Impact Survey', December 2005.

landmines with European Commission funding and more areas are planned to be cleared with the assistance of the US Government.

The disruption in energy provision in Armenia after the breakup of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s resulted in uncontrolled logging,[21] causing deforestation, erosion and soil degradation.[22] Overexploitation of the resources of Lake Sevan[23] resulted in the decline of water levels and decrease in fish stock.[24] Unsustainable practices and use of natural resources continue. These include burning agricultural wastes in the fields adjacent to forests, which results in forest fires and biodiversity loss. Inappropriate agricultural practices result in salinization of soils and erosion, and improper handling and disposal of industrial wastes causes high levels of pollution.[25] Armenia faces challenges posed by global climate change as well. The country is highly vulnerable to this phenomenon and is already experiencing an increase in temperatures and a decline in precipitation,[26] which contributes to desertification and forest fires. This, in turn, results in the decline of agricultural productivity and loss of vegetation and wildlife.

To address the issues of environmental degradation, the Government of Armenia has elaborated and worked on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Programme and the 2nd National Environmental Action Plan. The Government has also adopted other strategic programmes and over 15 laws regulating the environmental sector.

These measures, a few of which are ongoing, yielded some positive results. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), harmful gases responsible for the ozone layer destruction, were phased out in Armenia by 2010. The number of projects implemented under the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol is growing and includes Nubarashen and Lusakert projects for reducing the impact of hazardous wastes.

The water level of Lake Sevan increased by 3.6 metres since 2001, matching the level in 1963. However, the rise of the water level resulted in flooding in the nearby woodland areas, which gave rise to another problem: eutrophication. The Government now invests considerable resources to clear waterlogged areas. Other positive developments relate to the rehabilitation of irrigation systems to prevent water losses, construction and/or rehabilitation of several wastewater treatment systems, collection and recycling of PET (polyethylene terephthalate) waste, promotion of reforestation throughout the country, expansion of protected areas and better conservation of endangered species.

2.2 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

In 2003, the Government and civil society developed Armenia's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP I). By implementing the PRSP, the Government hoped to set the foundation for eradicating mass poverty and improving living standards by 2015 in accordance with the MDGs. In 2008, the PRSP II was developed and the current Government programme sets the priorities and targets for the overall development of Armenia. The Prospective Development Strategic Programme (PDSP) 2014–2025, adopted in March 2014, (called the Armenian Development Strategy while in

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21 Fifty percent of household energy for heating and other purposes came from fuelwood.

22 United Nations, 'United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2005-2009, Armenia'.

23 Lake Sevan is the biggest alpine lake in the Caucasus; its catchment basin occupies one sixth of the total territory of Armenia.

24 Government of Armenia, 'Rio+20 National Assessment Report', 2012.

25 UNDP, 'Country Programme Action Plan between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and UNDP 2010-2015'.

26 Meteorological data show an increase of temperatures in Armenia by 0.85 degrees and decrease of precipitation by 6 percent over the last 80 years.

draft) is to become the main national strategy for the country's overall development.

The Government of Armenia's development strategy highlights four strategic issues:

- Access to enhanced economic opportunities in line with sustainable development principles

- Increase in the capacity of citizens to participate and exercise their rights and responsibilities, and increase in the capacity of government institutions to comply with their obligations, and the awareness of human rights, including women's rights

- Access to social services in line with sustainable development principles

- Promotion of environmentally sound technologies and effective management of natural resources in accordance with the MDGs

Additional to these main development strategies, a few other relevant thematic strategies, policies and programmes were developed and implemented. These include programmes for the provision of social assistance packages; skills building and jobs finding/placement services to unemployed; promotion of economic activities that create jobs and benefit the poor (such as the promotion of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises); and promotion of entrepreneurship in general. Recently the Government has also been working on the revision of internal taxes to make them more 'poor-friendly' (e.g. progressive income tax, luxury tax), and on promoting public-private partnerships and corporate social responsibility.

In order to reduce gender disparities in wages and promote access to income-earning opportunities, the Government introduced the concept of inclusive growth. It set a package of concept notes, legislation and programmes for the advancement of gender equality that involve the inclusion of the theme in high-level strategies, as well as introducing practical measures that could bring almost immediate contribution for this challenge. For example, at the strategic level, the Government has issued the National Action Plan 2004–2010 on Improving the Situation of Women and Enhancing their Role in Society, the Gender Policy Strategic Action Plan for 2011–2015, and most recently, the Law on Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women (2013). In terms of concrete actions, an important accomplishment is the expansion[27] of childcare services that aim to support women's participation in the labour market.

Armenia undertook constitutional reforms in 2005 followed by a package of legislative reforms in 2007. The reforms improved the legislative framework regarding the separation of powers, including increased powers for the National Assembly and improved local self-government, the independence of the judiciary, the establishment of the Human Rights Defender's Office (HRDO), and guarantees of freedom of the media.

The criminal code was revised in 2008 to include relevant articles on active and passive corruption in line with the standards of the Council of Europe and the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). An Anti-Corruption Strategy and its action plan for 2009–2012 were adopted, which includes the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation system. In 2009, Armenia became a signatory to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Astana Declaration on Good Governance and Fighting Corruption. A number of legal acts were adopted, which, if implemented properly, could reduce corruption.

Furthermore, the Government of Armenia developed the Strategy on Border Security and Integrated Border Management, and prepared

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27 During 2003–2012, the share of children in preschool institutions increased from 18 percent to 28 percent. See the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, available at www.armstat.am/en/.

the 2013–2017 National Youth Strategy and Action Plan. A Youth Studies Institute was established to support evidence-based and participatory youth policymaking.

To address the needs of people living in disaster-prone areas, the Government established the Ministry of Emergency Situations in 2008 and the national platform in 2010. Previously, attention was directed at the response side of disaster management. DRR is now one of the priority areas of disaster risk management. Armenia adopted a national strategy and action plan on DRR in 2012 and instituted regulatory and institutional changes to be better positioned to reduce risks and be prepared for disasters.

Regarding environment, during the last decade, the Government of Armenia, with international assistance, tried to reverse the trend of environment degradation by introducing relevant regulations, strengthening the enforcement of laws, and implementing climate change adaptation, ecosystems conservation and restoration measures. The Government has ratified major global and regional environmental conventions, and made efforts to fulfil certain commitments and bring national legislation and policies closer to the requirements of those conventions.

2.3 THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION, GOVERNMENT, SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The role of the Government in international development cooperation in Armenia is to define the national priorities and invite partners and stakeholders to collaborate with their comparative advantages. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the focal point (in most cases), coordinating the interaction between international development partners and government agencies.[28]

According to the government development strategy, the focus of international development cooperation in Armenia has been on laying the foundations for sustainable socially oriented growth; ensuring access to enhanced economic opportunities; ensuring access to quality social services; promoting accountable, transparent and effective governing institutions; increasing the capacity of citizens to participate and exercise their rights and responsibilities, and of government institutions to comply with their obligations; supporting sound management of natural resources; and, improving effective management of natural resources.

Armenia receives between $250 million and $350 million a year in assistance from bilateral and multilateral agencies. According to OECD, cooperation is mainly focused on economic infrastructure and social sectors. Bilaterally, the largest net donor in recent years has been the United States, followed by the European Union. The International Monetary Fund, Japan, the World Bank, Germany, the Asian Development Bank, France, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the International Fund for Agricultural Development are also important donors. The UN system provides about $15 million in assistance per year.

Development assistance continues to play a large socio-economic role in Armenia. Net official development assistance and official aid[29] received totalled $272 million in 2012, which increased from $170 million in 2005. This volume represents 2.6 percent of gross national income for 2012, amounting to $92 per capita.

As a lower-middle-income and a landlocked country, Armenia does not appear as a priority country for traditional donors and funds are increasingly scarce. The main contributors that provide funding for UNDP to collaborate with the development of Armenia are the Govern-

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28   Information provided by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia in the United Nations. Also found in the Country Programme Action Plan and the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the United Nations Development Programme regarding Assistance to and Cooperation with the Government, signed in 1995.

29   World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2014.

ment of Armenia, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the European Union and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The private sector is a critical stakeholder in Armenia and a relevant partner in economic development as a provider of income, jobs, goods and services. Armenia has undergone business environment reforms over the past several years and has achieved a turnaround in its investment climate. Fostering entrepreneurship and stimulating the growth of SMEs continues to be a major development challenge and priority for the Government and development partners. SMEs play an important role in the Armenian economy but they face challenges linked to the difficulty of recruiting highly skilled employees, market risk/uncertainty and funding. Development banks and agencies have played a significant role in supporting the private sector in Armenia.

South-South cooperation has not been extensively explored in Armenia. 'South-South cooperation', or 'East-East cooperation', is a political term that is not always appreciated or accepted in Armenia. Armenia is eager to learn from other developing countries and to share its experiences, but it is not a key priority for the Government. However, Armenia, as part of the United Nations Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, is also part of the Almaty Programme of Action, a UN initiative created in 2003 with the overarching goal of forging effective partnerships to overcome the specific problems of landlocked developing countries that result from their lack of territorial access to the sea, their remoteness and their isolation from world markets. The objective of the Almaty Programme of Action was to establish a new global framework for developing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries, taking into account the interests of both landlocked and transit developing countries. As part of the Almaty Programme of Action, Armenia identified five priorities: fundamental transit policy, infrastructure development and maintenance,

international trade and trade facilitation, international support measures, and implementation and review.

Civil society's influence on government policies is limited in Armenia. The population itself does not yet firmly believe in the strength and potential of civil society organizations, nor does it provide the required support, through either charity or volunteerism. Nevertheless, civil society has increasingly played an important role as implementing partners in development work.

2.4 DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

Regional instability and conflicts have kept the South Caucasus states from fully realizing peace, stability, and economic development since the Soviet collapse in 1991. Other costs for the volatile region include threats to bordering states and the limited ability of the region or outside states to fully exploit energy resources or trade and transportation networks.

In the wake of policy reforms in the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region (Oblast) of Azerbaijani SSR petitioned to become part of Armenia in 1988, sparking conflict between the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijanis. A Russia-brokered ceasefire agreement was signed in 1994 and peace talks mediated by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group remain ongoing. International efforts to peaceably resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict continue.

The Turkish-Armenian reconciliation process is at stalemate, despite the fact that there were some signs of rapprochement in 2009, when the countries signed diplomatic protocols in Zurich. Turkey has linked the move towards normalizing relations with Armenia to a peace settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In April 2010, reacting to Turkey's refusal to fulfil the requirement of ratifying the accord in a reasonable time, Armenia suspended its own process for ratifying

the diplomatic protocols. The two states have no diplomatic relations and the border between Turkey and Armenia remains closed.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in force since 1999 serves as the legal framework for Armenia-European Union bilateral relations. Since 2004, Armenia and the other South Caucasus states have been part of the European Neighbourhood Policy. After several years of working towards integration with the European Union, and Armenia was expected to initial an Association Agreement with the European Union, but before that the Government announced its intension to join the Eurasian Economic Community Customs Union. Despite this change, the Armenian Government has reaffirmed its desire to continue strong cooperation with the European Union, including its commitment to governance and human rights reforms.

Armenia's trade with EU states far exceeds its trade with Eurasian Economic Community Customs Union states. However, Russia plays a major role in Armenia's economy as the major foreign investor. Armenia is also heavily dependent on Russia for security given the unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh situation. Russia is responsible for guarding Armenia's borders with Turkey and Iran. Armenia's long borders with both Turkey and Azerbaijan remain closed, leaving Georgia and Iran as the only viable trade routes. Closed borders impede economic opportunities and increase transport-related costs.

The impact of Armenia's possible integration into the Eurasian Economic Community Customs Union on the country's economic and political reform path remains to be seen. There are various risks, including macroeconomic risks in case of a new global economic downturn, which may have ripple effects on Armenia's exports, remittances and foreign investment flows; regional security risks and risks of natural disasters and climate change, given Armenia's high exposure to such disasters and climate extremes.

Chapter 3

UNDP'S RESPONSE AND STRATEGIES

This chapter provides an overview of UNDP's programmes during the 2005–2009 and 2010–2015 cycles, and explains the UN's strategy on development assistance as well as UNDP's response.

3.1 UNDP'S STRATEGY AND COORDINATION WITH THE UN SYSTEM

Armenia joined the UN in 1992 and in the same year, UNDP opened its office in Yerevan. The agencies that make up the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Armenia are coordinated by a Resident Coordinator, a post held by the UNDP Resident Representative. The UN system in Armenia is represented by numerous agencies, funds and programmes, several of which are resident:

- UNDP

- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Non-resident UN entities working in Armenia include:

- World Health Organization

- International Labour Organization

- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

- World Food Programme

- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

- Department of Public Information (as part of the Secretariat)

The International Organization for Migration is also viewed as part of the UNCT, as are the Bretton Woods institutions represented by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the International Finance Corporation.

The UN developed its first five-year Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the period 2005-2009 to contribute to the development of Armenia by building on the achievements of the Government and civil society in accordance with the targets and strategies outlined in the PRSP. The effort brought together the UN specialized agencies, multilateral and bilateral aid organizations, the Bretton Woods institutions, the Government and civil society organizations to provide assistance to Armenia and bring greater coherence to UN assistance programmes at the country level. Contributing towards the UNDAF outcomes, the UN agencies implemented initiatives worth $77,939,574 in Armenia during the period of 2005–2009.

Through a similar consultative process and the participation of the Government and civil society, the UN system in Armenia developed a second UNDAF for the period 2010–2015 in line with the main national development priorities outlined in the second PRSP. Contributing towards the UNDAF outcomes, the UN agencies

implemented initiatives worth $41,047,902 from 2010 to 2013.

Particularly for the second programing cycle, the UNCT agreed to prioritize vulnerable groups as target groups for cooperation.

THE UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMMES SINCE 2005

Aligned with the UNDAF, the UNDP Country Programme Documents (CPD) were developed in consultation with the Government, civil society and development partners. UNDP set out to contribute to the achievement of the country programme outcomes listed in Table 1 and Table 2.

Both programmes are designed to align with the objectives and priorities established by the Government in its national policy documents and substantiated in the first and second PRSP and most recently in the Prospective Development Strategic Programme (PDSP) 2014–2025. CPDs also considered the 2000 Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the two UNDAFs developed during the period. The process of developing the strategic instruments (CPD, Country Programme Action Plan and UNDAF) involved

Table 1. Country programme outcomes (2005–2009)	
Outcome 1	The national social monitoring system is expanded and strengthened.
Outcome 2	Innovative income generation schemes and mechanisms are introduced.
Outcome 3	Disaster management and recovery in at-risk communities is strengthened.
Outcome 4	Multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS are strengthened.
Outcome 5	Governing institutions with policy, oversight and electoral functions are strengthened.
Outcome 6	Participatory policymaking among targeted groups is promoted.
Outcome 7	Respected for, and the awareness of human rights, including women's rights, is increased.
Outcome 8	The conservation and sustainable use of natural resources is strengthened.
Outcome 9	Access to sustainable energy services is increased.

Table 2. Country programme outcomes (2010–2015)	
Outcome 1	National policies, strategies and programmes reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups.
Outcome 2	Vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia.
Outcome 3	National systems of data collection, reporting and monitoring of human development strengthened.
Outcome 4	Institutional capacities strengthened and mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups.
Outcome 5	Improved structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels ensure the progressive realization of human rights.
Outcome 6	Capacity at different levels of governance to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness is improved.
Outcome 7	Communities and people have the capacities to claim their rights and participate in decision-making processes.
Outcome 8	National capacities for disaster risk management strengthened.
Outcome 9	Armenia is better able to address key environmental challenges including climate change and natural resource management.

Figure 1. Key programme documents for periods covered by the ADR

Documents	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2025
PRSP I	←			→								
PRSP II				←				→				
PDSP										←		→
UNDAF I	←				→							
UNDAF II						←					→	
CPD I	←				→							
CPD II						←					→	
ADR coverage	←								→			

Source: UNDP Armenia, 2014

the Government and other stakeholders. Figure 1 shows the distribution over time of the main documents that guide the assessment of UNDP's positioning and contributions on national development challenges.

PROGRAMME PORTFOLIOS

During the first programming cycle (2005–2009), the Armenia Country Office was organized into three thematic portfolios: social economic governance, democratic governance and environmental governance. In 2013, UNDP decided to create a fourth portfolio called integrated border management (IBM), separating the theme from the democratic governance portfolio because of its size and management complexity. Projects are also classified under thematic areas aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2008–2013.

During the first programming cycle (2005–2009), national directors were appointed at the deputy ministerial level for each portfolio. They were entrusted with overall guidance and coordination of UNDP projects and programmes in order to promote stronger ownership of UNDP programmes. Assigning such functions at the highest possible level was expected to secure alignment with national development priorities and policies. Effort was to be made to avoid fragmentation in projects and use of resources, and

the programme was streamlined to ensure consistency and impact around the two development priorities for the period: ensuring citizens' participation and addressing inequalities. The Country Office is currently revising this approach for portfolios where one Ministry does not hold the mandate for the entire range of activities, such as democratic governance. In these cases, guidance and coordination will be assigned on a project-by-project basis.

Under the socio-economic governance portfolio, the concept of human development was promoted and integrated into national strategies, including PRSP II.[30] The main thrust was at the local level, while maintaining vertical links with national policymaking.

Under the democratic governance portfolio, UNDP interventions aimed at promoting and protecting human rights, including fighting corruption and drug and human trafficking. Under the IBM portfolio, the focus was on improving border security and facilitating the movement of people and goods across the borders. In environment and sustainable development, under the environmental governance portfolio, UNDP activities aimed at developing regulatory frameworks for strengthening environmental management to ensure adherence to sustainable development practices.

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30   Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan II.2.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

HIV/AIDS, disaster risk management (DRM) and gender equality were cross-cutting areas implemented using a mainstreaming approach.

Specific effort was made during the Country Programme 2010–2015 to better mainstream DRR, including the emerging challenge of climate change, into all development planning and policymaking. Efforts were also made to continue mainstreaming gender issues while also introducing standalone projects on women's empowerment.

HIV/AIDS was positioned as a cross-cutting issue in an effort to prevent the issue from being defined as a purely medical problem or a problem solely for at-risk groups, such as commercial sex workers and intravenous drug users. However, the first programing cycle also had a specific programme outcome, namely 'multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS are strengthened'. In the second programme cycle HIV/AIDS projects were realigned under the outcome, 'institutional capacities strengthened and mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups'.

UNDP worked with partners to facilitate multisectoral responses. Legislative and policy frameworks were introduced, an HIV/AIDS prevention system was established in penitentiaries, and police units and the military and at-risk groups participated in prevention activities. UNDP used the PRSP process to increase public awareness of HIV/AIDS and to mainstream HIV/AIDS issues into policy documents.

In disaster management, UNDP launched a capacity-building programme to strengthen the national disaster preparedness and risk reduction system. It piloted the 'Local-level Risk Management' module in five regions of Armenia with the goal of strengthening local-level DRR planning processes and implementation of prevention/mitigation measures, including measures for climate change adaptation. UNDP promoted public awareness activities on DRR for

instilling a culture of disaster prevention and advocating for mainstreaming of DRR in other development practices. UNDP also worked on the UNCT disaster preparedness and response efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Disaster Management Team and ensure inter-agency contingency planning.

In gender equality, UNDP supported the implementation of the National Action Plan on Advancement of Women through capacity building for leading public institutions. A comprehensive gap analysis of legislation through a gender lens resulted in a bill on equal rights and equal opportunities, and countrywide public awareness campaigns aimed at combating gender stereotypes. These efforts led the Government to consider the promotion of gender equality as a priority in its 2008–2012 programme.

Additional focus was given during the country programme 2010–2015 to further promoting human rights, climate change adaptation, corporate social responsibility and private sector engagement. UNDP also sought ways to support Armenia's efforts to improve relations with neighbouring countries. When starting the new cycle, resource mobilization remained a major challenge and partnerships with the Armenian diaspora and the European Commission needed to be strengthened and broadened.

Recognizing the need to further integrate human rights into all aspects of its work, UNDP sought to advance a rights-based approach. In each area of cooperation, UNDP aimed to implement programmes that: (a) helped the Government, as a principal duty-bearer, protect the rights of citizens; (b) created an enabling environment for the achievement of rights; and (c) strengthened the capacity of citizens to exercise their rights.

3.2 PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

During the 2005–2013 country programme period, UNDP showed a considerable increase in delivery figures, with only four additional staff

members: one in programme and three in operations. Delivery tripled in 2013 compared with 2005, while the management ratio decreased by 7.4 percentage points. This means that the office has done more with less through increased efficiency. UNDP has managed funds that, although proportionally limited in terms of other types of development assistance, have been concentrated in important areas (contributions will be detailed by thematic area in the following chapters). The sharp increase in resources in 2013, as indicated in Figure 2, is explained by funding from the Government (through a European Investment Bank loan and a Neighbourhood Investment Fund grant) for the implementation of the IBM programme. In total, from 2005 to 2013, UNDP funding accounted for 5 percent, while resources from other donors provided 36 percent, and the Government shared 59 percent of the total expenditures. The Government's share

of total expenses was relatively high only in 2013, supporting primarily targeted activities linked to IBM.

Expenditures for each thematic area over the two programme cycles are presented in Figure 3. The area of democratic governance has constituted more than half of the expenses of the total programme.

In most years, UNDP met its resource mobilization targets. In 2012, there was a peak in resource mobilization linked to the IBM project — a positive indication of growing interest and trust on the part of the Government to expand work with UNDP.

In terms of implementation modalities (national implementation or direct UNDP implementation) there was a prevalence of projects and

Figure 2. **Evolution of resource mobilization and cost-sharing, 2005–2013**
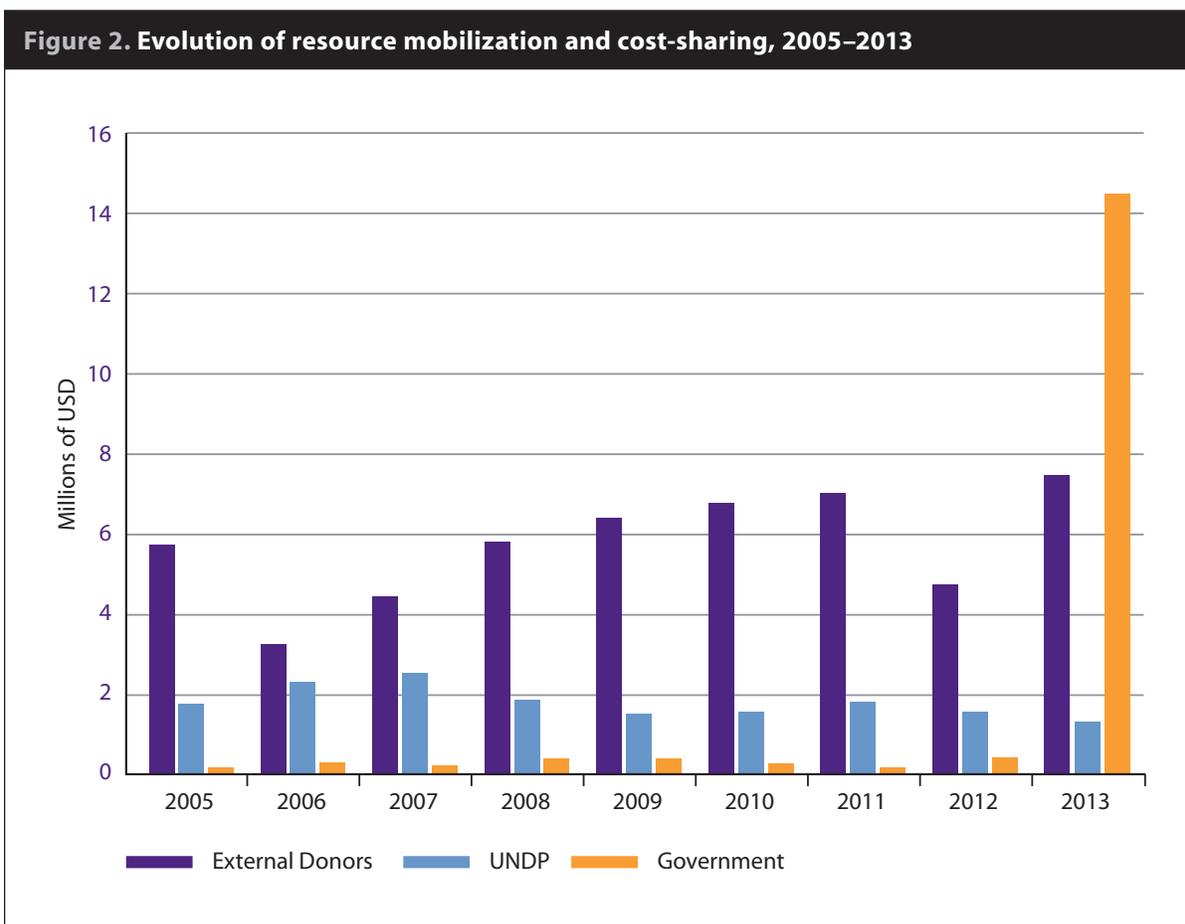
Source: ATLAS, UNDP Armenia 2014

Figure 3. Budget and expenditure by practice area, 2005–2013

	Poverty reduction & MDG achievement	Democratic governance	Crisis prevention and recovery	Environment & sustainable development	Unlinked in programme tree
Total budget	16,144	47,962	6,148	11,203	2,299
Total expenditure	14,455	34,520	4,972	9,469	2,043
Delivery rate	90%	72%	81%	86%	89%
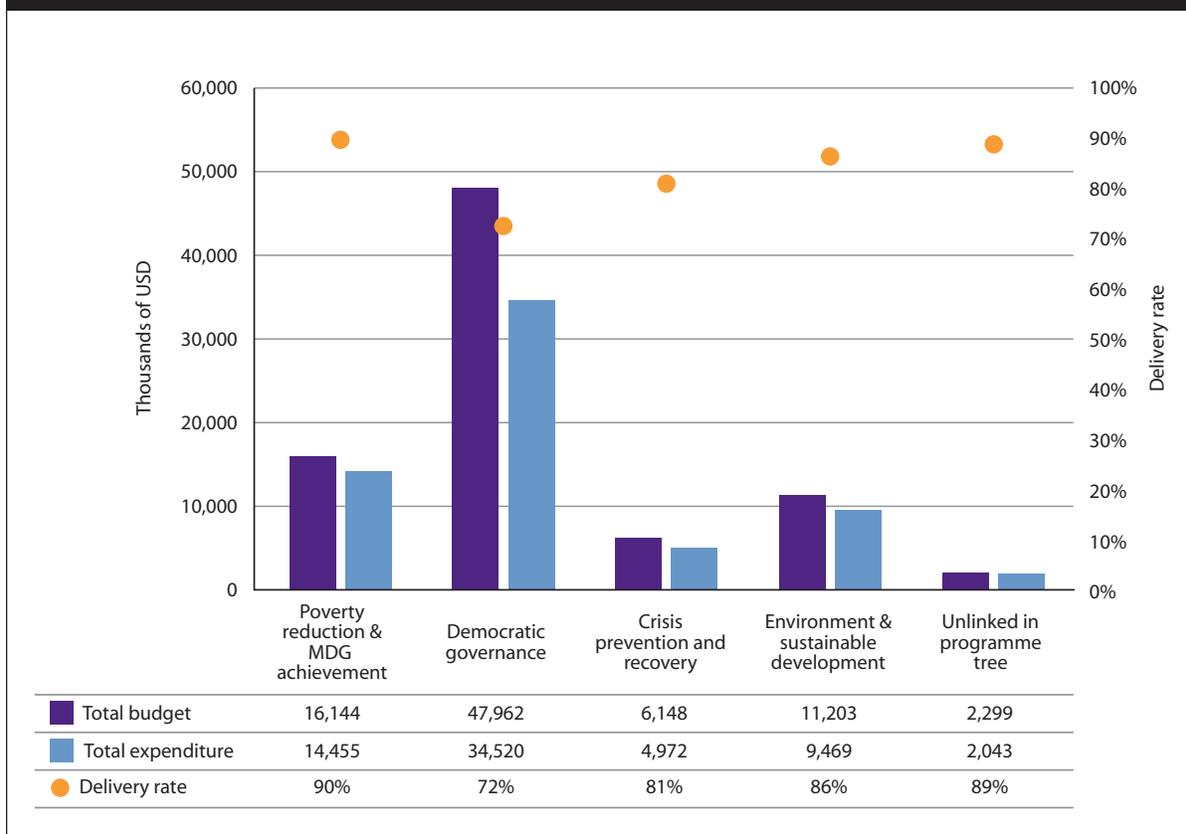
Source: ATLAS, 2014

Note: 'Unlinked in programme tree' means the project is not classified to any outcome. These are generally administrative costs, unassigned to a particular outcome.

activities managed with national counterparts. This indicates significant involvement of national counterparts in the initiatives, promoting national ownership of results. National execution was dominant throughout the evaluation period across all thematic areas.

During both programming cycles, UNDP aimed to increasingly focus on the use of national execution as the main modality for programme management to ensure national ownership of results. To ensure effectiveness, the Country Office expected to continue providing operational backstopping for national executing agencies until national institutions were ready to take over this task. To reach resource mobilization targets, a comprehensive strategy was to be adopted aimed at ensuring cost-sharing by the Government and generating additional donor support. To ensure effective programme management and resource mobilization, the capacity of the Country Office to build partnerships and manage directly delivered services needed strengthening.

Chapter 4

UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

This chapter presents the assessment of UNDP's contribution to development results in each of the four programme areas: poverty reduction, democratic governance, environment and sustainable development, and disaster and crisis prevention and recovery. Contributions will be assessed against four criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

The assessment covers a nine-year period from 2005 to 2013, guided by UNDP Armenia's CPD 2005–2009 and CPD 2010–2015. Between the two periods, there is a large degree of coherence in the programme structure and continuity in many projects. Therefore, the assessment is presented as a continuous programme using the structure of the last country programme for presentation purpose.

4.1 POVERTY REDUCTION

Under the thematic area of poverty reduction, UNDP's contributions to the following four outcomes are assessed:

1. National policies, strategies and programmes reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups – CPD **Outcome 1**

2. Vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia – CPD **Outcome 2**

3. National systems of data collection, reporting and monitoring of human development strengthened – CPD **Outcome 3**

4. Capacity at different levels of governance to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness is improved – CPD **Outcome 6**

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to profound economic and societal changes in Armenia.

Almost immediately after gaining independence, Armenia entered a period of deep economic and social crisis, resulting in significant impoverishment of the population. During the first decade of independence, high unemployment forced an estimated 1 million people — a quarter of the population — to leave Armenia in search of jobs and better living conditions. In 2014, unemployment still affected a significant portion of the labour force, with rates especially high outside the capital and among youth.

Despite some economic progress, in 2013 nearly one third of the population was still living in poverty and inequality was significant among the 10 regions of the country. Poverty incidences are higher in vulnerable groups that suffered adverse impacts of natural disasters (earthquake) and landmines along the border with Azerbaijan.

Another significant vulnerable group is youth. The high level of youth unemployment reinforced the need for political attention to VET and continuing education to ensure the availability of a competitive and qualified workforce.

Decentralizing power by strengthening local governance institutions is being used as a strategy to reduce regional disparities and boost the capacities of local governance institutions to deliver needed services to vulnerable populations. The introduction of strategic planning and performance budgeting at the municipal level has enhanced planning and monitoring capacities of elected officials and promoted transparency and accountability in public service delivery. The ongoing decentralization reforms, the establishment of inter-community unions, and the consolidation of communities in several areas of the country were intended to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the services provided to vulnerable groups.

To reduce poverty and inequalities, the Government of Armenia worked with a number of international development organizations, including UN agencies, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the European Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Austrian Development Agency and the UK Department for International Development.

Under Outcome 1 **(national policies, strategies and programmes reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups)**, UNDP planned to:

- build national and local capacities in developing and implementing diversified income-generating practices

- improve the policy framework and mechanisms for building a knowledge economy

- enhance the policy framework, mechanisms and enabling environment for revitalizing and strengthening SMEs

Initiatives under this outcome include Support to SME Development, Support to Armenia-Diaspora Cooperation, and Aid for Trade.

The Support to SME Development initiatives are implemented jointly with the Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Development National Centre of Armenia. The initiatives were developed to improve business support services to SMEs at regional and local levels by introducing innovative income-generation schemes, improving SMEs' knowledge and business skills, developing export opportunities for SMEs, and providing information and promotional services to SMEs. Additionally, initiatives incorporated start-up support activities

and a revolving credit fund, only accessible to registered enterprises that participated in the start-up programme.

The overall goal of the Support to Armenia-Diaspora Cooperation initiatives was to augment the Government's efforts in addressing the needs of the people in Armenia. It included the UN Global Armenia initiative, the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals Programme and the creation of a 'Global Armenia' website to engage the worldwide Armenian diaspora and connect Armenia to knowledge, experiences and resources. The project expected to promote public dialogue and the development and implementation of a comprehensive conceptual framework on Armenia-diaspora partnerships and relations. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Diaspora were the implementing partners in the Government under this outcome.

Aid for Trade initiatives were to be implemented in the Tavush region, which is strategically significant in terms of freight passage.[31] The project aimed to support the economic development of the region through the promotion of trade by building the capacities of local and national public-sector authorities, SMEs and business support institutions for trade mainstreaming and export promotion. The project also aimed to strengthen the capacity of the Market Information Centre to provide adequate customer services.

Under Outcome 2 **(vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia)**, UNDP expected to support the Government to improve VET and life-long learning (LLL) programmes, to promote public-private partnerships to provide alternative livelihoods opportunities and improve services to vulnerable groups, and to help companies develop and implement corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies.

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31 Freight to Russian and other CIS, European and Turkish markets passes through this region.

Over two phases, the Support to Modernization of VET System initiative aimed to:

- develop procedures to regulate the organization, implementation and approval of LLL programmes

- develop the normative and legislative environment for the VET sector

- improve the VET system content

- improve the knowledge and skills of VET faculty and students through training sessions

- upgrade VET institutions' facilities

- implement a public relations campaign for the VET system in Armenia to match the demand and supply sides of the dynamically changing domestic labour markets

Also aligned under this outcome were the Global Compact initiatives that started in 2006 with the purpose of fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships for achieving the MDGs. The Global Compact asks companies to embrace, support and enact within their sphere of influence a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption. By the end of 2010, the Armenian network of companies consisted of 42 members.

The first two phases of the Global Compact aimed at building and consolidating the Global Compact network; enhancing companies' participation in policy dialogues and formulating policies to promote responsible, inclusive entrepreneurship; and fostering the implementation of multi-stakeholder partnership projects.

Policy dialogues, roundtable discussions and public relations campaigns were to be organized on the role of business in developing CSR. In 2007, UNDP supported a baseline study on public private partnerships (PPP), developed with a concept paper on PPP. The Government approved the concept in 2009 and introduced a draft law on PPP.

In partnership with and support from public and private sectors, the following main initiatives to benefit vulnerable groups were implemented under the Global Compact-Armenia's first phase: an arts and crafts centre for the disabled; the Youth Career Trail I-IV Projects, under which 180 youth were offered six-month internships during 2007–2013; milk collection centres from 10 boundary communities in Tavush; improved school life and learning conditions; and income-generating opportunities in four communities from processing sheepskin previously discarded as waste.

The main objective of the third phase of the Global Compact was to create stimulating conditions for the private sector to invest in high-value-added recycling of PET waste. UNDP and partners intended to raise public awareness about PET waste sorting and recycling, and to establish waste collecting, sorting and processing systems to supply PET to large recyclers.

Under Outcome 3 **(national systems of data collection, reporting and monitoring of human development strengthened)**, UNDP envisaged strengthening national and local-level institutions to collect, analyse and report disaggregated socio-economic data. The goal was to strengthen evidence-based analysis and policymaking for sustainable development under the Support to Decentralization project.[32] It included support for the development of the ArmInfo database in partnership with UNICEF; support for the agricultural census in partnership with the Government, FAO and other development agencies; and support for the preparation of MDG progress reports in 2005 and 2010, the 2010 National Human Development Report on migration issues, and the National Assessment Report on the implementation of Rio conventions in 2012.

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32 Classified under Outcome 6.

Support to the Agriculture Census project aimed to contribute to the implementation of preparatory activities for the census.[33] UNDP provided financial resource management services for the joint initiative and, in cooperation with National Statistical Service and other development actors, provided methodological support for the development of indicators and questionnaires. UNDP supported trainings, the preparation of schematic maps for 26 communities and the procurement of needed equipment. UNDP support also helped in hiring support staff and supervising the preparatory processes to conduct pilot testing of the census instruments in seven communities.

Under Outcome 6 (**capacity at different level of governance to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness is improved**), UNDP aimed at supporting the Government to:

- strengthen legal and institutional frameworks to promote decentralization

- strengthen capacities of local governments for accountable and improved planning, management and delivery of public goods and services

- strengthen the national capacities for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of social policies

The community development work aimed to support the most disadvantaged border communities through participatory community-based development planning, implementation and monitoring. Efforts were made to create farmers' associations, funds, community-based organizations and NGOs; to rehabilitate important social and economic infrastructures; to develop agro-processing activities; to foster private sector development and cross-border cooperation; to strengthen Armenian-Georgian economic relations; to support the implementation of innovative income-generating schemes and research

activities; and to increase income earning potential of poor households.

Support to decentralization processes aimed to strengthen institutional and administrative capacities of local self-government bodies. Efforts focused on support to the Ministry of Territorial Administration for mechanisms enabling the establishment of inter-community unions, and to improve municipal service systems. The initiatives were expected to support the professional development of municipal servants in the area of local self-governance, which is important for the implementation of decentralization reforms. Community databases and a methodology would be developed to support strengthening of capacities for monitoring and evaluation — a key tool for the Government to balance territorial development.

The performance budgeting initiatives were intended to support local governance decentralization processes and improve local self-government bodies' capacities to ensure accountable and measurable public expenditure management. These initiatives would introduce performance budgeting mechanisms into planning, monitoring and evaluation processes at the community level in partnership with 13 city municipalities and 10 rural municipalities, and with the Community Finance Officers Association.

The initiatives on sustainable livelihood for socially vulnerable refugees, internally displaced persons and local families were implemented in partnership with UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNIDO. These initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life and incomes of rural inhabitants through two approaches. First, the initiatives sought to strengthen the capacities of local self-government bodies for strategic planning processes (developing plans, introducing budgeting methodologies and establishing community development funds to enhance income-generating opportunities). Second, the

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33   A full-scale fieldwork for agricultural census is to be conducted in the fourth quarter of 2014.

sustainable livelihood initiatives aimed to provide direct support to target beneficiaries, such as agricultural inputs, access to social housing, diversified energy services, health care services, and trainings on building vocational and business skills.

4.1.1 RELEVANCE

UNDP contributions under the thematic area of poverty reduction were in proper alignment with national needs and government priorities, as well as with UNDP's mandate. Initiatives have been relevant to:

■ developing national policies, strategies and programmes to reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups

■ empowering vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, to have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia

■ strengthening national systems of data collection, reporting and monitoring of human development

■ improving capacity at different levels of governance to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness

Sustainable and inclusive growth has been a key priority in Armenia. This priority is reflected in the Sustainable Development Programme (SDP) for 2008–2012, the Prospective Development Strategic Programme (PDSP) for 2014–2025, the Rural and Agricultural Sustainable Development Strategy for 2010–2020, and other strategy documents and programmes. The SDP and the PDSP in particular stress the importance of employment growth and the role of SMEs in job creation.

Upstream, UNDP has been relevant in helping the Government to improve policies and programmes with a pro-poor and vulnerable population bias. Downstream, UNDP worked with local governments, community members and service providers on capacity building, jobs creation

and improving the support mechanisms and services for vulnerable populations.

In support of the focus on vulnerable populations, UNDP has successfully developed and applied the Participatory Appraisal of Comparative Advantages tool for the selection of target communities. This helped to ensure the selection of the most vulnerable groups and the relevance of UNDP's interventions at local levels.

UNDP has also been key to ensuring that Armenian development strategies recognize the challenge of youth employment and suggest measures for enhancing their employability. The Government also recognizes the importance of VET for improving the skills and knowledge of young people and has approved a number of policy and legislative documents for VET development. Furthermore, PPP and CSR have also been highlighted as priorities in the development plans and strategies (SDP and PDSP).

In addressing gender disparities, UNDP has also collaborated with the Government to develop legislative documents and programmes. These are discussed under the democratic governance component.

UNDP's interventions were also relevant to its mandate of fostering development with a dedicated focus on addressing inequalities. UNDP applied its resources in collaboration with various partners, particularly focusing on VET, LLL, PPP and CSR development — all of which had a potential to benefit the poor, including women and youth. UNDP was most successful in helping the development of policy and legislative documents, setting VET standards and improving the technical base of VET institutions.

The need for improved statistics and monitoring systems is another expected outcome noted in the SDP. This outcome is mentioned both in the SDP chapter on structural and functional reforms of public administration systems and in the section on the environment.

UNDP's initiatives to build capacities of local self-governing bodies to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness were also aligned with the country's national strategies. The PDSP for 2014–2025 notes:

> The Government of [Armenia], in the forthcoming years, will continue to: a) increase the transparency and accountability of the operations of local self-governing bodies, clarification of internal and external control procedures in communities, and implementation of the mandatory legislative requirement for reporting of the head of community on the implementation of community four-year development programme, its submission to the commnity council for approval and making the report publicly available; b) promote the participation of citizens in decision-making and public administration at local level. In order to increase the level of openness of the operations of local self-governing bodies, mechanisms for awareness of community residents and community civil society, consultations with the latter and feedback will be introduced, and the institute of public supervision will be fully established; and c) increase the lawfulness, efficiency, transparency, openness and accountability of financial management in communities.

All interventions employed participatory approaches to promote national ownership and capacity development for inclusive development. Community members were engaged in planning, implementing and monitoring processes.

4.1.2 EFFECTIVENESS

Under Outcome 1 **(national policies, strategies and programmes reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups)**, UNDP has provided effective contributions to strengthen regulatory frameworks and mechanisms to establish and revitalize SME, and national and local capacities to develop and implement innovative and diversified income-generating policies and practices targeting most vulnerable groups, with the expectation to reduce inequalities.

However, UNDP resources have been modest, and alone, UNDP has little potential to influence macro indicators like the Gini index.[34] There has been no improvement in the Gini index in the last decade; in both 2004 and 2012 the value of an income-based Gini index was 3.7. This was largely due to the larger effect of the global financial crises of 2008 on the poor. Before the crises, the indicator was improving and during 2004–2008, it showed an improvement of 0.025 points, still far from the target set by UNDP of 0.06 points during one programming cycle. Weak competition, oligopolistic structures and corruption are major constraints on Armenia's development,[35] and also hinder reduction in inequalities.

Despite lack of progress in reducing inequalities, UNDP supported the Government to improve national-level planning processes for poverty reduction by assisting with the development of the PRSP, the SDP, the SME development strategy and the Regional Development Strategy. UNDP also assisted the Government with the development of a strategy and concept paper on the Development of Armenia-Diaspora Partnerships.

UNDP helped the Government develop a communities' database to contribute to more informed decision-making processes. This database is regularly updated by local-level administrations; it was particularly useful for the development of the recent PDSP for 2014–2025, and has been regularly used by both local and national authorities during planning processes.

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34 Indicator listed in the Country Programme Action Plan to monitor progress and UNDP's contributions to reduce inequalities.

35 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 'Strategy for Armenia, 2012', available at www.ebrd.com/downloads/country/strategy/armenia.pdf

In efforts to improve income-earning potential, UNDP strengthened the capacities of its main partner, the Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Development National Centre of Armenia, to implement start-up business support programmes and increase capabilities of some vulnerable groups and communities. Since 2006, over 850 entrepreneurs from all regions of the country have participated in the trainings. Of these trained individuals, 290 started new businesses, which resulted in 350 new workplaces. Access to loans totalling about $1 million was provided to 273 start-ups.

Together with the establishment of start-ups, UNDP's regional activities were directed at supporting cooperation between local authorities and interest groups, advancing business cooperation and networking, and promoting local products to national and foreign markets. Thus, for ensuring the sale of dried fruits, a complete value chain approach was developed with a series of collection centres to collect, package, store and sell agricultural produce. A collection centre in Bagratasen community provides services to five neighbouring communities, which resulted in a reported[36] 30 percent increase in beneficiary households' incomes.

Other measures that contributed to the increased income-earning potential of communities included those that enabled farming households to reduce agricultural output losses and save resources. On a pilot basis, UNDP promoted the use of anti-hail nets in the areas prone to this natural hazard and introduced solar fruit tray dryers in parallel to electrical tray dryers. Solar dryers are more cost efficient and contribute to green economy and green jobs.

The Support to Armenia-Diaspora Cooperation project developed and implemented a compre-hensive conceptual framework on Armenia-diaspora relations.

The Aid for Trade project implemented in Tavush supported economic development of the region. Capacities of local and national public sector authorities, SMEs, and business were developed to support institutions for trade mainstreaming and export promotion. The capacities of the Market Information Centre were developed to provide adequate customer services. During 2011–2013, more than 150 clients received specialized trainings on business planning, agro-processing, agro-marketing, dried-fruit production technologies, and greenhouse technologies. More than 2.6 tons of dried fruit was produced and sold during the first months of the project's operations.

Under Outcome 2 **(vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia)**, UNDP has been successful in engaging civil society organizations and private stakeholders in discussions about VET, PPP and CSR. A law on VET was developed and submitted to the Government; the employment law was amended to enable rural youth to become eligible for free enrolment in the pubic VET training and retraining programmes; the educational policy was reformed; and the CSR and PPP concepts and legal acts were revised.

PPP initiatives for recycling and waste management and green economy initiatives were replicated in 17 communities. VET system modernization[37] was effectively implemented covering the whole chain of educational process. VET qualification standards were developed and VET capacity development and educational programmes tailored to meet the demands of the labour market.

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36 This increase was reported by the heads of five communities.

37 Modernization includes a whole chain of reforms aimed at developing normative and legislative environments in the VET sector, enhancing the vocational education and training system content, providing trainings on various topics for VET faculty and students, upgrading existing VET facilities, and conducting a public relations campaign to match the demand and supply sides of the dynamically changing domestic labour market.

UNDP has also been successful in developing a concept note on PPP and CSR. A public awareness campaign was conducted around PPP and CSR issues and the creation of PPP partnerships were facilitated for a number of projects. These partnerships resulted in the creation of jobs in PET collection and recycling and agribusiness fields, in the increased willingness of business owners to employ youth.

Other benefits include the improvement of the environmental situation due to PET waste collection and recycling. Twenty-four months after the launch of the project, 14 municipalities were separating, processing and sending to recycling more than 60 percent of accumulated plastic in the project's geographic areas of work. Additionally, large companies such as K-TELECOM CJSC, Orange-Armenia CJCS, Ameriabank, Coca-Cola Hellenic Bottling Company Armenia CJSC, and KPMG have put CSR principles into practice.

UNDP effectively contributed to the development of the LLL[38] sector policy and helped to develop and reform legislative frameworks[39] to improve the enabling environment in employment, continuing education and VET. Relevant legislative initiatives include the law on VET, amendments to the law on employment, and state competency-based qualification standards for VET.[40]

Practice laboratories equipped with UNDP's assistance are now able to engage in income-generating activities. This has boosted VET institutions' interest in further perfecting the services offered to their beneficiaries. As a result of these efforts, the enrolment rate of students in UNDP-assisted VET institutions is rising.

The role of UNDP was also important in facilitating access of vulnerable groups to VET and LLL opportunities. UNDP has been consistent in advocating for an equity approach focused on the most marginalized and vulnerable populations, including women and youth.[41] In remote communities, UNDP helped 266 long-term unemployed women receive vocational retraining. Following the training, 40–50 percent of the beneficiaries found jobs.

The factors contributing to the effectiveness of UNDP's interventions on VET, LLL, PPP and CSR included UNDP's strong partnerships with other development entities; its sound reputation among stakeholders; the use of participatory approaches in the development of PPP, CSR and LLL concepts and their applications; and access to UNDP global expertise on human development issues through the Global Compact. UNDP drew heavily on the experience accumulated worldwide on the promotion of PPP and CSR concepts and strategies.[42]

UNDP enjoys the comparative advantage of being viewed as a trusted and neutral partner not only by the Government but also by civil society and private sector representatives. This allowed UNDP to effectively foster dialogue among diverse groups of stakeholders around PPP and CSR. Another advantage is UNDP's successful collaboration with other development agencies and its ability to leverage resources with different agencies. UNDP brought professional

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38 The Life-Long Learning (LLL) Concept is a legal document that provides insight into the opportunities available to adults to obtain a modern education, receive trainings and qualifications, compete in the labour market and be socially secure as they age.

39 Law on Employment, Law on VET, Draft Law on Adult Education, Life-Long Learning Concept, Draft Government Decree on Armenian National Qualification Framework, draft Model for Continuous In-Service VET Teachers Training, etc.

40 Over 125 competency-based qualification standards have been revised and developed by the National Centre of VET Development, which was the direct beneficiary of the UNDP VET project.

41 Projects contributing to this outcome were marked as level 2 in the gender marker, indicating that they were gender sensitive.

42 A consultant brought expertise on ISO 26000, which is a practical tool for businesses to practice CSR.

and experienced staff with expertise in poverty and inequalities reduction. All national stakeholders interviewed mentioned the expertise of UNDP and its staff members as a value-added of these partnerships.

Under Outcome 3 **(national systems of data collection, reporting and monitoring of human development strengthened)**, UNDP has effectively contributed to the strengthening of capacities in data collection and data systematization through the joint work with the Government on the development of indicators for the communities' database. Based on these indicators UNDP supported the development of a unified community database that informs national- and regional-level decision-making processes. UNDP was also successful in contributing to the ArmInfo database, which tracks progress towards achieving the MDGs and monitors commitments to human development.

Most recently, UNDP helped implement preparatory activities for the agriculture census, which included the development of methodologies and testing census instruments. UNDP's involvement in the development of various policies and strategy documents has also helped to increase data analysis capacities of government counterparts. The involvement of national experts in the preparation of different studies (e.g. the National Human Development Report) contributed to enhanced national skills in data analysis. Moreover, reporting capacities and results measurement were increased with the preparation and publishing of MDG progress reports in 2005 and 2010, the preparation of sector-specific reports, and the Human Development Report on Migration.

Under Outcome 6 **(capacity at different levels of government to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness is improved)**, UNDP has been effective in strengthening capacities at community, regional and national levels of government for decentralization, planning, management, delivery of public goods and services, and monitoring the implementation of social policies. The Government Effectiveness Index[43] (percentile rank 0–100) showed some improvement over a five-year period (2008–2012), increasing from 46.4 to 54.5; however, it is still behind the 2015 target of 71.5 set by UNDP. At the current pace, it is unlikely the target will be achieved by 2015.

UNDP was successful in helping the Government to develop laws, regulatory frameworks, government strategies and concept papers (e.g. SDP, PDSP, Concept Paper on Balanced Territorial Development) covering decentralization issues. UNDP also helped develop principles and a methodology for creating inter-community unions, and helped draft the Law on Agriculture Cooperatives in partnership with the Agriculture Alliance.[44]

Moreover, a UNDP-prepared overview of rural communities (socio-economic information and analysis and typology of communities) served as a basis for the effective implementation of a territorial development strategy and local governance reforms.

Finally, UNDP, in partnership with the Government and community-based organizations, supported more than 250,000 people living in over 150 communities to benefit from increased access to water and sanitation services, and new employment and

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43   This indicator is listed in the UNDP country programme to help measure UNDP's contributions towards national progress. It captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service, the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the Government's commitment to such policies.

44   The Agriculture Alliance is a joint initiative of 16 member organizations (local NGOs, research institutions, international NGOs) that joined forces to address and raise the most critical issues in agriculture sector. As a member, UNDP participates in meetings and contributes to strategy papers.

income-generation opportunities (95 projects) that became available in agro-processing, food processing and construction sectors. In these initiatives, UNDP was able to successfully demonstrate how forming community-based organizations and fostering cooperation between community members and local governments can help identify problems, explore solutions and implement relevant measures.

4.1.3 EFFICIENCY

UNDP initiatives under the thematic area of poverty reduction have been efficiently implemented and for the most part, outputs have been timely delivered with adequate quality. During the assessment period, no significant constraints at the management or implementation level were determined to have affected results or UNDP's positioning and credibility in the country.

Some interviewees raised questions about failure to recruit an additional programme officer for the area of poverty, but there is no concrete evidence that the programme or this particular portfolio suffered in implementation or prospective opportunities. The implementation rate was maintained and the portfolio was still able to grow without the additional programme officer.[45]

A total of $19,426,000 was delivered in programmes in the area of poverty reduction and MDG achievement during the period 2005–2013, with an average annual delivery rate of 90 percent. A total of $2,645,266.68 (13.6 percent of the programme) was applied towards national policies, strategies and programmes to reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups. A total of $6,134,353.06 (31.6 percent) was invested in vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, to promote greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia. $232,612.40 (1.2 percent)

went towards strengthening national systems of data collection and reporting and monitoring of human development. A total of $10,413,908.20 (53.6 percent) went towards improving capacity at different levels of governance to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness.

In contributing to national policies, strategies and programmes to reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups, the efficiency of UNDP's operations was enhanced by promoting cooperation and leveraging resources of local administrations, civil society and the private sector. Government co-financing for some projects was in the range of 50 to 70 percent. In the Tavush region, UNDP worked with Oxfam and the Centre for Agribusiness and Rural Development Foundation to improve access to affordable credit for entrepreneurs, support the development of a law on agricultural associations, reduce production sale risks, and increase agricultural value added.

In promoting greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia, UNDP successfully mobilized and leveraged resources with development partners from a CSR Working Group consisting of Global Compact Armenia, the British Council, AmCham and the Eurasia Foundation. The partnership initiated discussions and held meetings and seminars on Armenian legislation relevant to CSR and PPP and on the role of businesses. Other seminars were co-organized with the VivaCell-MTS Company, the Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets, and GIZ.

UNDP also worked jointly with the International Centre for Human Development to organize a series of policy dialogues on CSR issues. According to sources consulted, these dialogues resulted in increased awareness among the general population, the private sector, NGOs and municipal employees about CSR. Participants were able to more actively participate in dis-

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45 In 2015, a new European Union-funded European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development project on agricultural development should be implemented by this portfolio.

cussions on legislative acts, effectively undertake CSR activities within their companies, and develop or improve CSR strategies. Capacity development was provided to improve practical skills on reporting and development of governing principles for the members of Global Compact network members. The portion of the population that now understands CSR has not been measured; however, before these interventions, the population had no understanding about CSR. In addition, the International Centre for Human Development's activities helped increase the role of civil society and think tanks in the decision-making process in Armenia.

The efficiency of VET interventions was also enhanced by the proper identification of beneficiary needs. This helped ensure that the skills transferred and equipment provided were utilized. UNDP devoted time and resources to investigating the demand for certain occupations and the required equipment for VET institutions before making investment decisions.

UNDP has in particular efficiently managed human and financial resources to strengthen national systems for collecting data and monitoring and reporting on human development. Synergic work was promoted with multiple stakeholders and duplication of efforts was avoided. Moreover, according to the sources consulted, the synergies have also ensured the most efficient use of existing human and institutional capacities in the country, as each agency (e.g. UNICEF and FAO) brought its own expertise to joint initiatives.

UNDP has also contributed in a highly participatory and transparent manner to improving capacities at different levels of governance to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. UNDP successfully mobilized and leveraged resources with the Government and other UN agencies to support decentralization and sustainable livelihood initiatives, further increasing efficiency, reducing cost, avoiding duplication of efforts and promoting national ownership of results.

UNDP supported the establishment of agricultural cooperatives that generate income for their members. To secure their sustainability, the Government will need to adopt the Law on Agriculture Cooperatives. To this end, UNDP participates in the Agricultural Alliance — a partnership that contributes to advocacy and public dialogue between the Government, NGOs, international organizations and research institutions to support the development of policy papers.

Performance budgeting initiatives were mostly sustainable for large communities. An impeding factor for smaller communities is the limited financial staff: small communities have only one financial specialist, leading to sustainability challenges when there is turnover.

4.1.4 SUSTAINABILITY

UNDP has strategically focused on contributing to initiatives that have ensured the sustainability of results, particularly in the area of SME community development, information systems, VET, CSR and PPP.

A number of strategy documents and policies that UNDP helped develop are fostering inclusive growth. These include the National Strategy on SME Development and the concept of national diaspora partnership that the Government has adopted and implemented. UNDP also contributed to strengthening capacities of relevant institutions to support SME development at national and local levels. There are signs of an increasingly improved environment to foster trade among regions and an improved system of agricultural produce realization, with established market chains.

About 60 percent of registered start-ups with UNDP's assistance are still in business and many initiatives were scaled up and replicated by the Government, local NGOs and aid agencies such as Oxfam, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, the World Bank and USAID. Following the combined efforts of various development

actors for improving the enabling environment, the number of SMEs increased by 25 percent[46] during 2010–2012.

Most sustainable contributions to results include the amended law on employment, the law on VET and the reformed education policy. The State Competency-Based Qualification Standards for VET were developed and VET capacities for teachers were institutionalized. The VET Regional Multifunctional Centres were rehabilitated and refurbished in line with EU technical requirements, and the eligibility criteria were met for the Copenhagen Process[47] in the VET sector. A PPP concept paper was developed with further implementation in waste management and youth employment, PPP models were replicated and a CSR concept paper was developed. UNDP also contributed to the establishment of the Municipal Service System with the development of the law, legal acts, a curriculum for training, tests and training materials that are still used and operational.

Sustainability of UNDP-supported agricultural cooperatives depends on the adoption of the Law on Agriculture Cooperatives. In addition, performance budgeting initiatives are most likely to be sustained in large communities than in small ones. This is due to the limited availability of relevant financial officers in small communities.

Among the factors contributing to successful sustainability of results are that UNDP interventions were designed to have long-term results in a sphere where similar initiatives were limited because of a less sensitized private sector, a less developed green economy and underdeveloped PPPs. In particular, arrangements and agreements between the municipalities, waste

management companies and recycling companies to recycle PET waste resulted in decreased environmental pollution caused by local PET waste.

Moreover, there is high national ownership of results and strong partnerships and involvement of a relevant and broad spectrum of stakeholders, including civil society organizations and research institutions that are likely to contribute to the replication and sustainability of results.

4.2 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Under the thematic area of democratic governance, UNDP contributions to the following four outcomes are assessed:

1. Multisectorial responses to HIV/AIDS are strengthened – CPD I **Outcome 4** (2005–2009)

2. Institutional capacities strengthened and mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups – CPD II **Outcome 4** (2010–2015)

3. Improved structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels ensure the progressive realization of human rights – CPD **Outcome 5**

4. Communities and people have the capacities to claim their rights and participate in decision-making processes – CPD **Outcome 7**

Registration of HIV cases started in Armenia in 1988 and by March 2014, 1,686 cases were registered. The number of new HIV infections registered is growing every year thanks to scaled-up diagnostic capacities, increasing accessibility to HIV testing, and establishment of a voluntary counselling and testing system.[48] Along with an increase in the number of HIV tests, the HIV surveillance system has become more

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46   See the Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Development National Centre of Armenia, smednc.am/hy/ content/%D6%83%D5%B4%D5%B1-%D5%B6-%D5%A9%D5%BE%D5%A5%D6%80%D5%B8%D5%BE

47   Launched in 2002, the Copenhagen process aims to improve the performance, quality and attractiveness of VET through enhanced cooperation at European level. The process is based on mutually agreed priorities that are reviewed periodically.

48   UNGASS Country Progress Reports for Armenia 2008–2009 and 2010–2011.

efficient. AIDS diagnostics have also improved since 2005 due to the growing HIV/AIDS-related knowledge among health care workers. Antiretroviral (ARV) treatment was initiated in 2005 and is today being provided to all HIV patients in need.[49]

Regarding structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels to ensure the progressive realization of human rights, the World Governance Indicators' voice and accountability indicator shows a continuous degradation between 2005 and 2009. Since 2010, the indicator suggests a reversal of this negative trend and gradual improvements in perceptions of the extent to which Armenia's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government. Freedom of expression, freedom of association, and freedom of the media are also perceived to be on the rise.

The role of the Human Rights Defender's Office (HRDO) has been strengthened and improvements have been observed in terms of institutional immunity of the office, its capacity to investigate claims of human rights violations and involvement in the legislative process, and the financial independence of the institution. A presidential decree made it mandatory to send all drafts legislations relating to democracy and human rights for the HRDO's review before presenting it to the Government. The national framework for human rights has advanced through adoption of the National Strategy on Human Rights Protection.

Progress has also been made in expanding human rights education in schools.[50] In recent years,

new subjects have been introduced in primary and middle schools relevant to human rights, democracy and civic education.[51] Human rights education issues have also been included in the legal documents defining the content of general education, in particular in the state concept and educational standards.[52]

In gender equality, Armenia now ranks 115th in political empowerment and 131st in health and survival of women, out of 136 studied countries.[53] The gender inequality index (GII) in 2010 indicates Armenia constantly improved over the period 2005–2012 from 0.4 in 2005 to 0.34 in 2012.[54]

In fighting corruption, the Transparency International Corruption Index, which measures perceived corruption in a country's public sector, indicates improvement between 2012 and 2013: Armenia improved its ranking from 105th to 94th place, with the value improving from 34 to 36.[55]

In fighting human and drug trafficking, the capacities of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary to investigate, prosecute and make final judgements on trafficking cases have been strengthened. The progress achieved by Armenia in combating human trafficking has been recognized by the United States, which moved the country from Tier 2 on the watch list in the US State Department Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report in 2009 to Tier 1 in 2013. Armenia has thus graduated to a country whose government fully complies with the US Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards. In drug control, a National Drug Strategy has

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49   UNGASS Country Progress Reports for Armenia 2008–2009 and 2010–2011.

50   UNDP, 'Baseline Study on Human Rights Education in Armenia', UNDP Armenia, 2005.

51   'I and the world', 'History of the Fatherland', 'Life Skills' and 'History of the Armenian Church'.

52   National Plan of Action on Human Rights Education in Armenia for 2012-2015, draft.

53   World Economic Forum, 'The Global Gender Gap Report 2013'.

54   Human Development Report 1980-2012, available at www.knoema.com/HDR2013/human-development-report-1980-2012?tsId=1006660.

55   See the Transparency International Corruption Index, www.cpi.transparency.org/cpi2013/.

been developed and the legislative framework enhanced. Moreover, drug use has been decriminalized in Armenia and drug substitution treatment was introduced.

HIV/AIDS was a cross-cutting area, but there were also standalone projects aligned to two outcomes. During the first programming cycle, HIV/AIDS projects were aligned to the outcomes under 'multisectorial responses to HIV/AIDS are strengthened'. In the second programme cycle, UNDP did not implement any projects under the outcome, 'institutional capacities strengthened and mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups'. The focus remained on addressing the needs of the particular vulnerable group of people living with HIV. Other outcomes also focused attention on vulnerable groups, as seen in the poverty reduction thematic area and the disaster relief and recovery thematic area.

Under Outcome 4 from CPD I (2005–2009) (**strengthen the multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS**), UNDP planned to strengthen the capacities of the National Centre on AIDS Prevention (NCAP) as the principal national institution in HIV/AIDS. It also aimed to develop HIV/AIDS prevention mechanisms within the uniformed services and to raise public awareness and empower people living with HIV to reduce the stigma.

Under Outcome 4 from CPD II (2010–2015) (**strengthened institutional capacities and put mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups)**, UNDP focused exclusively on HIV/AIDS and planned to support the adoption of a number of HIV/AIDS regulatory and policy documents. UNDP also sought to promote HIV prevention initiatives in penitentiaries and military units; establish voluntary counselling and testing centres at national, regional and local level; and implement outreach programmes among vulnerable groups.

Under Outcome 5 (**improve structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels ensure the progressive realization of human rights)**, UNDP worked at strengthening the institutional capacity of the HRDO and establishing a tolerance centre. Surveys and baseline studies on human rights and human rights education (including tolerance education) revealed deficiencies at various levels. Recommendations of assessments of institutional frameworks, existing policies and capacities were incorporated in the Anti-trafficking National Action Plan to provide an adequate institutional response, and work was done to improve and harmonize drug-related legislation. In support of the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption, a gap analysis on the compatibility of national legislation and procedures with UNCAC requirements was conducted. Recommendations from this gap analysis were presented for incorporation into the national anti-corruption strategy and policy documents. Efforts to promote human rights and to strengthen the HRDO were to set the basis for integrating a rights-based approach into all UNDP programmes during the 2010–2015 cycle.

Under Outcome 7 (**communities and people have the capacities to claim their rights and participate in decision-making)**, the Government defined procedures for organizing and holding public consultations on draft legislations and normative acts in 2010, improving the possibilities for citizens to participate in policymaking processes in Armenia at the national level. NGOs are now more frequently invited to participate in drafting legislation or to discuss legislative initiatives by government institutions.[56]

The programme focused on four areas of intervention: participatory decision-making, independent media and access to information, human rights education, and confidence-building and dialogue processes. The strategy to promote participatory decision-making consists, in particular, of developing capacities and creating possibilities at the local level for participation in community

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56   Armenia ENP Progress Reports 2009 and 2010.

development, and of promoting participatory and evidence-based policymaking at the national level on youth policies. In the area of media independence and access to information, UNDP focused on building media capacities on issues such as corruption, tolerance and gender; on supporting the application of the Law on Freedom of Information at the local level; and on directly disseminating information about health care, social protection and education among the vulnerable groups.

Major international donors support democracy and governance in Armenia, including the European Union, USAID, the World Bank, USAID and GIZ. The European Union is the largest donor and key player in the good governance sector, supporting governance reform within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

In the areas supported by UNDP — the HDRO and awareness-raising on human rights issues among civil servants — the EU provides support to strengthening capacities of the HRDO as well as to the Civil Service Council through the SIGMA programme. The HRDO is also supported by the OSCE, USAID and Counterpart International.

In the field of border management, in addition to the projects implemented by UNDP and financed by the European Union, the European Investment Bank and the EU Neighbourhood Investment Facility, the US Export Control and Related Border Security Programme (EXBS) are also active. The European Union, USAID, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank support trade-facilitation initiatives related to border management.

In the area of anti-trafficking, support is provided mainly by the OSCE, the US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and the International Organization for Migration. In the area of gender equality, the

most important international actors include UNFPA, USAID, OSCE and the National Democratic Institute.

In the fight against corruption, the European Union, USAID and OSCE are among the most active organizations.

4.2.1 RELEVANCE

UNDP contributions under the thematic area of democratic governance were aligned with national needs and government priorities, as well as with UNDP's mandate. Initiatives have been relevant to strengthening institutional capacities and mechanisms to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups and to improving structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels to ensure the progressive realization of human rights. UNDP initiatives have also been relevant to supporting communities and people to develop capacities to claim their rights and to participate in decision-making processes.

In strengthening institutional capacities and mechanisms to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups, UNDP made relevant contributions, particularly to strengthening multisectoral responses to people living with HIV. When UNDP started working in the area of HIV/AIDS in Armenia, the country belonged to a region with the fastest growth of the epidemic.[57] Awareness of HIV was particularly low among youth and the educational system did not properly address HIV-related challenges. There was strong stigma and discrimination towards people living with HIV, leading to their social exclusion and inhibiting their full integration into society.

With the support of UNDP and other stakeholders, the PRSP I included strengthening preventive measures and early diagnosis, and treatment programmes for contagious diseases, including HIV. In 2008, the PRSP II included HIV under diseases of special social significance. UNDP helped to implement the goal of the National

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57   According to the WHO/UNAIDS classification.

Programme on HIV/AIDS Prevention: caring for people living with HIV and supporting the fulfilment of Armenia's commitment to address HIV/AIDS in the national uniformed services, made in follow-up to the UN Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS in 2001.

UNDP initiatives were designed and developed with the Government, and in particular, with NCAP. As the principal national stakeholder in the HIV/AIDS response mechanism, NCAP was also actively involved in implementation. NCAP had a leading position within the Country Coordination Mechanism of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which played a central role in coordinating HIV/AIDS-related activities in the country. This ensured a better alignment with the National Programme on HIV/AIDS Prevention, helping to position the programme on HIV/AIDS as complementary to the Global Fund, thus increasing the programme's relevance.

Furthermore, HIV/AIDS initiatives were aligned with UNDP's mandate and in compliance with the UN's rights-based approach. They focused on strengthening capacities of duty bearers (in particular the NCAP and uniformed services) to effectively respond to the HIV epidemic. At the same time, people living with HIV were empowered to claim their rights.

The programme predominantly relied on a downstream approach, addressing the implementation of the national programme on the response to the HIV epidemic and the empowerment of people living with HIV. It also contributed upstream support to the development of a Country-Specific Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS Interventions for Uniformed Services.

In improving structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels to ensure the progressive realization of human rights, UNDP made relevant contributions to increase the capacity of citizens to participate and to exercise their rights and responsibilities. UNDP also made relevant contributions towards enabling

government institutions to comply with their obligations. UNDP initiatives directed at institutional modernization of public administration and democratic governance are in line with the national development priorities defined in the PRSP I for 2004–2007, PRSP II for 2008–2011 and the PDSP for 2014–2025. Armenia's commitment to reforms in the area of democratic governance and respect for human rights were also explicitly expressed in the EU-Armenia European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan. Two out of eight priority areas in the plan were directed to strengthening democratic structures and respect for human rights.

UNDP initiatives on institutional strengthening of public administration were also aligned with UNDP's mandate and have been designed in compliance with the UN's rights-based approach. Focus was on the supply side, strengthening the capacities of the Government, as a principal duty bearer, to protect the rights of Armenians, creating an enabling environment for the progressive achievement of human rights. Initiatives linked to human rights have also been interrelated and complementary with the UNDP expected Outcome 7, to improve the capacities of communities and people to claim their rights and participate in decision-making processes. Attention was focused on strengthening the demand for democratic governance by raising awareness on human rights and empowering citizens to claim their rights. Working upstream, UNDP advised on the development of national policies, strategies, action plans and programmes. Downstream, it supported their implementation.

Despite the fact that integrated border management is classified under the human rights/tolerance expected outcome, the initiatives are not yet designed (or relevant) to address the most critical areas from a human rights/tolerance perspective. The initiatives mention human rights as one of the cross-cutting issues and as a topic of trainings. The principal objective of the integrated border management initiative is the facilitation of trade, transit and movement of people across the border while also ensuring the security of

the border, thus contributing to socio-economic growth.[58] Building national capacities on border management alone cannot be considered a priority in efforts to prevent the violations of human rights in the country. No serious violations of human rights related to border management have been reported in Armenia by international organizations or human rights watchdog organizations in recent years, and there were no recommendations related to border management in the Universal Periodic Review of Armenia by the UN Human Rights Council in 2010.[59] The initiative would thus be better aligned with the objectives of the social and economic governance component of UNDP's country programme, while still maintaining the human-rights-based and cross-cutting approach.

Nevertheless, there is great potential for IBM initiatives to better align with human rights and to contribute to other development areas. In 2010, the Government of Armenia adopted an IBM strategy and in cooperation with UNDP initiated several projects to improve the quality of border management services, upgrade infrastructures of border crossing points, and provide the equipment and IT systems for enhancing intra-service and cross-border cooperation. It is likely, then, that clear strategies could be developed to further align IBM initiatives with the different development areas it could contribute towards, such as human rights, migration, poverty and trade.

UNDP also made relevant contributions to build the capacities of communities and people to claim their rights and to participate in decision-making in alignment with national priorities to promote participatory policymaking at local and national levels. The PRSP II recognized the participatory process as "one of the important priorities of territorial administration and local self-governance development."[60] In the PDSP 2014–2025, the

Government committed to "promote the participation of citizens in decision-making and public administration at local level."[61] And interventions were in line with UNDP's human-rights-based approach, focusing in particular on the empowerment of rights holders by building capacities of citizens and creating opportunities for them to participate in decision-making processes. Initiatives are also in line with the Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority, ratified by Armenia in 2013.

UNDP initiatives aiming at creating a platform for direct participation of youth groups in research and monitoring of youth policies and programmes have been supporting the Government's efforts to address youth problems, which are recognized as a policy priority. The importance of the active participation of youth in decision-making processes has been recognized in PRSP II, which includes a chapter on youth policy. UNDP has contributed to the development of the National Youth Strategy 2013–2017, which aims to enhance youth participation in political, economic and cultural life.

The programme has made relevant upstream contributions to developing national strategies in human rights education and youth, but downstream interventions were predominant, focusing on promoting participatory decision-making, particularly at the local level. There is increasingly an enabling policy environment in Armenia for citizen participation at the community level, following the approval of the Law on Local Governance and the Law on Freedom of Information. Additionally, UNDP introduced human rights education in middle and high schools, which falls within UNDP's mandate to promote human rights with the strategy of long-term institutional integration.

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58 As stated in project documents and emphasized by Bradley Busetto in his speech on 11 April 2014, available at www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2014/04/11/a-new-project-to-upgrade-bagratashen-sadakhlo-border-crossing-point-/

59 Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Armenia (A/HRC/15/9).

60 PRSP II.

61 Armenia Development Strategy for 2012–2025.

UNDP has positioned itself as a relevant international actor in the field of democratic governance in Armenia. It does not have a dominant position; in the field of local governance there is a multitude of actors, including GIZ, USAID and the European Union. Nonetheless, UNDP has been able to facilitate and leverage national and other donors' efforts.

4.2.2 EFFECTIVENESS

UNDP has made effective contributions to promoting democratic governance in Armenia. These include strengthening institutional capacities and mechanisms to address human rights issues, empowering people living with HIV to claim their rights and fight stigma, promoting participatory decision-making at the local level and supporting youth participation in policymaking. Being a reliable partner of the Government has allowed UNDP to successfully support the development of national policies and institutions with high-quality expertise based on international standards and experience. Most significant results have been achieved in sectors where UNDP has been continuously involved over several years and has been able to address all facets of a problem. The active involvement of all relevant stakeholders from the Government and civil society, going beyond a simple formal endorsement of the projects and promoting genuine national ownership, has also been a positive factor that influenced success.

Under Outcome 4 from CPD II **(institutional capacities strengthened and mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups)**, UNDP effectively contributed to building the capacities of institutions working on HIV/AIDS, empowering people living with HIV, raising awareness in the uniformed services and mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the Government's development strategy.

UNDP contributed to strengthening NCAP's capacities to deliver ARV treatment. It also helped build the capacity of a local NGO, Real World Real People, to raise awareness, fight stigma and empower people living with HIV — an important factor contributing to the success and national ownership of the initiatives. UNDP also supported the procurement of ARV drugs, the construction of the NCAP building and six laboratories, and the provision of necessary medical equipment. But most importantly, UNDP was successful in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in PRSP II, recognizing it as a disease of special social significance and emphasising increased public awareness, preventing the spread of the infection and increased efficiency of treatment.

UNDP helped develop a Country Specific Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS Interventions for Uniformed Services and incorporate it in the National Programme on HIV/AIDS Prevention 2007–2011. A module on HIV/AIDS-related issues was incorporated in the training curricula of the military and police academies and relevant teaching materials were provided to increase awareness on HIV/AIDS among uniformed services. Capacities and infrastructure of the Ministry of Defence to fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic were also strengthened with trainings and equipment for HIV testing laboratories in two military hospitals.

To reduce internal stigma, the capacities of the community of people living with HIV was strengthened to undertake joint efforts benefiting the community. UNDP and Real World Real People, bringing together people living with HIV, promoted advocacy and awareness-raising activities, and provided care and support services, in particular through the organization of self-help groups. Real World Real People currently works with over half of all people living with HIV registered in Armenia. Beneficiaries interviewed confirmed that the programme helped create a community of people living with HIV and raise awareness of HIV/AIDS issues within this community. The publication of a magazine targeting people living with HIV was an important milestone for disseminating information. The direct involvement of people from the affected community through Real World Real

People (an implementing partner) was a significant factor in the programme's success.

UNDP also facilitated awareness-raising on HIV/AIDS among youth and migrants in rural communities. The UNDP-developed teaching manual 'Healthy Lifestyle' included topics on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, and was integrated into the curricula of middle and high schools (8–9 and 10–11 grades). HIV awareness-raising and prevention activities were conducted among migrants, particularly in rural communities, based on recommendations from a study[62] conducted by UNDP that revealed HIV risk behaviours among migrants, and assessed the needs of the migrants and their family members.

Under Outcome 5, **(improved structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels ensure the progressive realization of human rights)**, UNDP has effectively contributed to human rights in four broad areas of human rights protection: the fights against human and drug trafficking, gender equality, and the fight against corruption.

UNDP's main contributions have been strengthening the HRDO's capacities, raising awareness of human rights among civil servants, increasing capacities to combat drug and human trafficking and to assist victims, improving legislative framework on gender equality and increased capacities of women to engage in decision-making processes at the local level, and contributing to an anti-corruption strategy by supporting the drafting process and ensuring compliance with the UNCAC requirements.

UNDP, in close cooperation with the European Union and EU member states, has successfully introduced the concept of integrated border management, also aligned under this human rights outcome, and helped develop the first

Strategy on Border Security and Integrated State Border Management and the Action Plan 2011–2015 for Armenia. Standard operating procedures for a border crossing point have been established and improvements in the operation of agencies involved in border management recognized by consulted sources. The infrastructure at border crossing points was developed in light of needs of vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities and women. Initiatives are relatively recent to fully assess their effectiveness and are less aligned to human rights outcomes per se, as noted earlier.

Within the framework of the EU Advisory Group project funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP, advice and recommendations on Armenia's migration policies were provided, which facilitated the process and finalization of negotiations on the Visa Facilitation and Re-admission Agreements with the European Union, ratified in 2013. The agreements make it easier and cheaper for Armenian citizens to travel to and throughout the European Union.

UNDP's role as a neutral actor has contributed to an effective coordination of different national agencies involved in border management. The exchange of experience with South Caucasus countries has also been a contributing factor; Georgia's experience in particular has informed the development of Armenian strategies on border management and the fight against drug trafficking.

In the area of human rights protection, UNDP has significantly contributed to strengthening the capacities of the HRDO to carry out its mandate. The capacities of the HRDO and trust of the general public and other national institutions in the HRDO have increased, as demonstrated in Caucasus Barometer in Figure 4 and the increase in the number of complaints received and more efficiently resolved, Figure 5.[63]

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62   UNDP Armenia, 'Report on the study focused on developing effective HIV preventive activities and interventions among the migrants originating from urban and rural areas of the Republic of Armenia and their family members', 2008. Available at www.un.am/res/Library/UNDP%20Publications%202008/UNDP_60_eng_pdf.pdf.

63   HRDO reports faster favourable resolution of complaints by relevant institutions. In 2012, 557 complaints out of 999 that were within the HRDO's powers were resolved in favour of the applicant. (Source: HRDO Annual Report 2012).

Figure 4. Caucasus Barometer 2008–2013: Trust – Ombudsman (%)

Legend: Fully or somewhat distrust | Neither trust nor distrust | Fully or somewhat trust
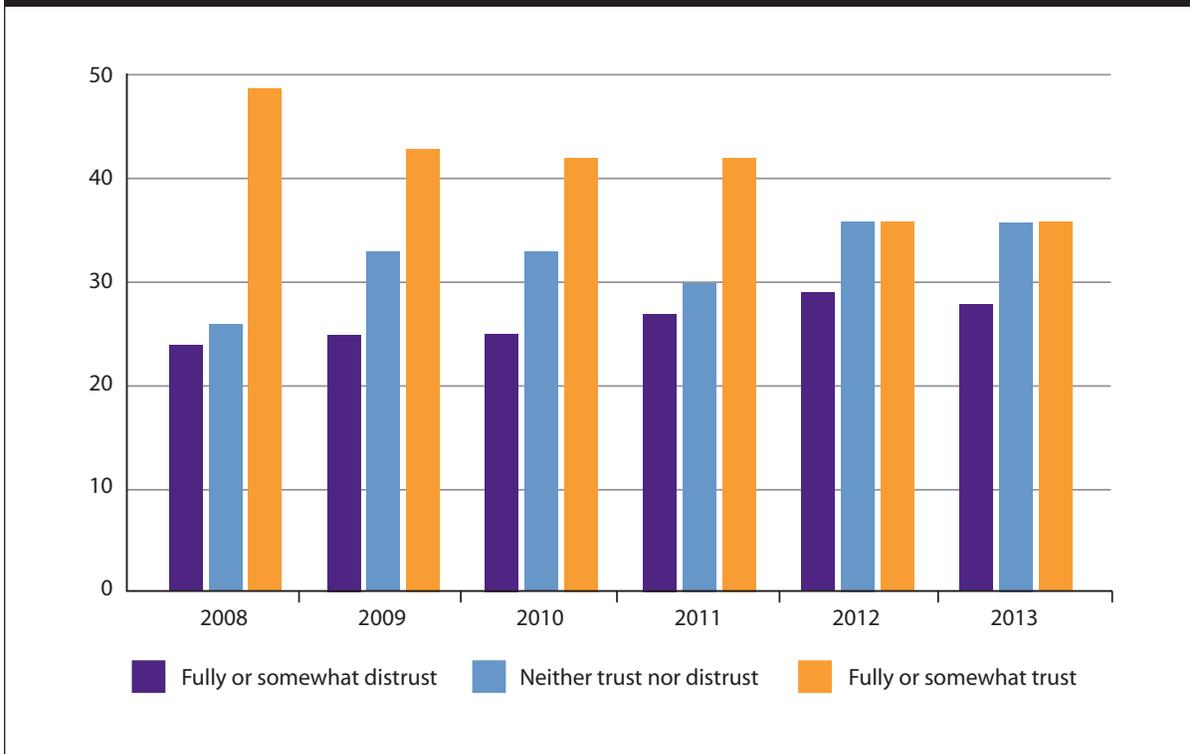
Source: Caucasus Barometer, www.caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2013am/TRUOMB-withoutdkra/

Figure 5. Number of Complaints Received by the Human Rights Defender's Office, 2005–2013

Legend: Written | Oral | Total
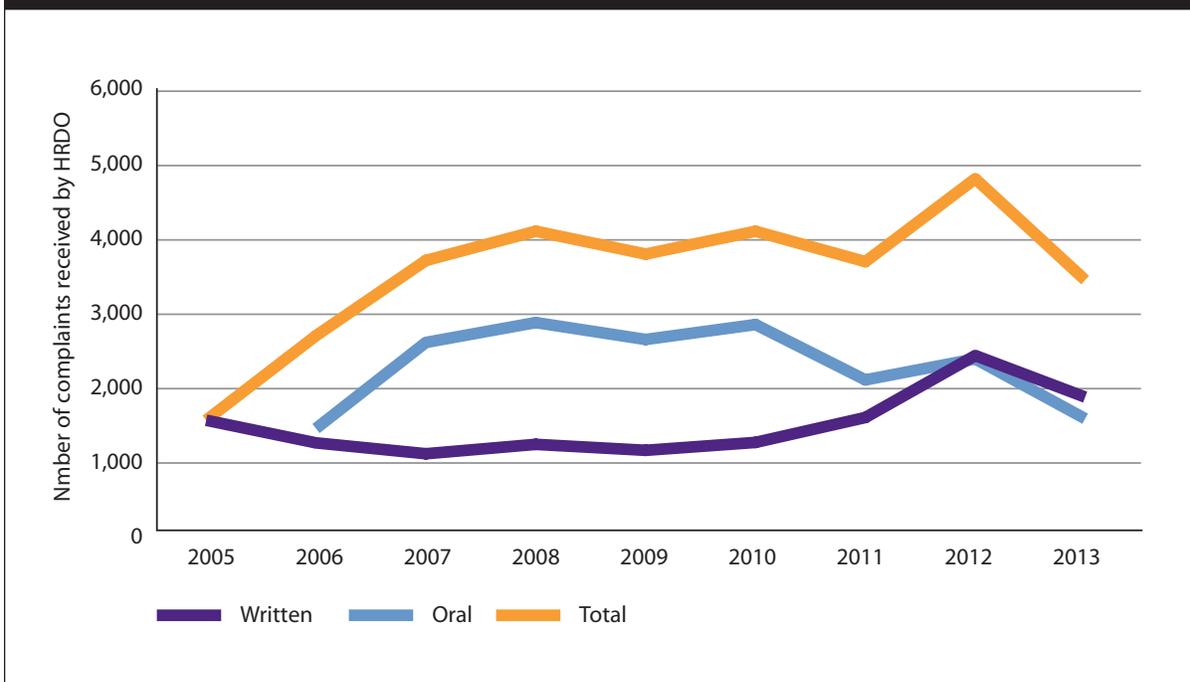
Source: HRDO, 2014

National institutions are now more likely to implement the recommendations of the HRDO as well.[64] In 2012, the HRDO submitted about 60 legislative proposals aimed at human rights defence, which were mostly accepted by the project initiators. Factors contributing have been that the intervention has complexly addressed the supply (capacity building of the HRDO), the demand (public awareness), as well as the enabling environment (understanding of the role of the HRDO by other national institutions). Moreover, effective partnerships have been developed with civil society organizations.

With UNDP support, the HRDO institutionalized relations with civil society in the framework of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture's National Prevention Mechanism by establishing a Council on Torture Prevention for joint monitoring of detention facilities. Sources consulted confirm triangulation that UNDP has contributed to internal capacity building as well as to enhancing the trustworthiness of the institution through improved annual and *ad hoc* reports. This has helped the HRDO to gradually position itself as an important actor with respect and growing influence in society.

Awareness and understanding of human rights has also been further institutionalized in national institutions by integrating a module on human rights in the official curricula of civil servants. UNDP trained a pool of experts to ensure the availability of quality human resources to continue to provide trainings. The human rights trainings for civil servants continue to be provided and remain popular among civil servants, contributing to an increased awareness of human rights among civil servants, as confirmed by consulted sources. A contributing factor to success and sustainability of results is the fact that the trainings have been embedded within the existing training system of the Civil Service Council. However, the Civil Service Council has not always been able to ensure the quality of the trainings due to limitations in the remuneration of trainers.

UNDP has also contributed to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Armenia by providing support to the drafting process of the National Strategy on Human Rights Protection, adopted in 2012, and the related Action Plan adopted in 2014.

In fighting human trafficking, UNDP helped raise public awareness. It also helped build the capacities of law enforcement and the judiciary and helped improve national legislative, policy and institutional frameworks. The nationwide public awareness campaign and the establishment of migration information points are perceived by consulted sources as having significantly helped to raise the level of awareness[65] about the risk of human trafficking among the general public and migrants in particular. Computer-based trainings for police, prosecutors and border agencies developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Office for Central Asia (which UNDP helped to establish) have contributed to improving law enforcement capacities to investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases, and to an increased number of victims identified and criminals imprisoned. In 2010, there was a 33 percent rise in trafficking cases investigated by law enforcement and 66 percent rise in victims assisted by shelters. A special police unit has also been established to fight human trafficking, and the criminal code and criminal procedures code were amended to better address human trafficking cases.

With support from UNDP, a National Referral Mechanism has been established that defines the cooperative framework through which state actors fulfil their obligations to protect and promote the rights of trafficked persons in close partnership with civil society. A National Action

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64   HRDO Annual Report 2012.

65   As indicated by relevant consulted sources working in the field of human trafficking.

Plan on Human Trafficking 2007–2009 was developed with UNDP support. The plan calls for the partial nationalization of shelters for trafficked persons, offering a sustainable approach to victim assistance. UNDP has also facilitated the signature of cooperation agreements with United Arab Emirates and Russia to improve assistance to Armenian migrants working in these countries. As a result of the Government's actions against human trafficking supported by UNDP in the period 2004–2009, Armenia has graduated from the Tier 2 watch list of countries of the US State Department Trafficking in Persons report to Tier 1 in 2009.

A significant contributing factor in the success of UNDP's programme on human trafficking is UNDP's continuous involvement in the field over a relatively long period (six years), which allowed it to address all the facets of the problem. Additionally, UNDP has contributed to the effective coordination of stakeholders by creating a network of NGOs active in the field and facilitating cooperation between the Government and civil society. The results would not be possible or sustained without the national ownership and active involvement of the relevant national authorities.

In fighting drug trafficking, UNDP has effectively contributed to improved national legal and regulatory frameworks for drug control, developing the National Programme on Combating Drug Addiction and Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs 2009–2012. UNDP support helped to decriminalize drug use and strengthen the interdiction capacities of law enforcement agencies.[66] UNDP has supported the establishment of the National Drug Monitoring Centre and the Drug Rehabilitation Centre, thus improving the drug information systems as well as treatment services for drug users. Moreover, UNDP has introduced

the 'Healthy Lifestyle' module in the curricula of middle schools in an effort to inhibit the use of drugs. Here again, factors contributing to results were UNDP's long-term support (2001–2009); the scope of the anti-drug programme (covering both supply and demand reduction); and the regional dimension of the programme, which offered the opportunity to share experience among the South Caucasus countries.

Under gender equality and women's empowerment standalone initiatives, UNDP has effectively contributed to the development of the State Gender Policy Concept and the Law on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities. It has also helped to strengthen the capacities of the National Institute of Labour and Social Research,[67] integrate gender in the civil servant curricula, and empower and increase the engagement of women in decision-making processes.

The adoption of the Law on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities in May 2013 is considered a significant contribution to the promotion of gender equality. However, it provoked a negative campaign that confused sexual orientation and identity with gender equality and women's empowerment, revealing the lack of tolerance and understanding of these concepts in Armenian society. This incident represented a setback in the progress achieved so far in promoting gender equality in Armenia.

On the positive side, behavioural change at the personal level can be observed among direct women participants in UNDP's activities, many of whom show increased self-confidence and capacities to engage in public activities at the local level. There are signs of changing attitudes towards women in communities where there are successful women serving as an example. In the framework of the Gender and Politics programme, the

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66   In 2010, 1,524, cases of illegal drug circulation were revealed — 23.1 percent more than the previous year. See http://armenpress.am/eng/news/648476/UNODC_Office_to_be_established_in_Armenia.html

67   The National Institute of Labour and Social Research is a non-profit, non-commercial state organization within the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues. Its core mission is to provide research (expert evaluations, policy recommendations) in the sphere of social protection, as well as training for social protection sector specialists.

number of elected women in the 2008 local elections in five regions targeted by UNDP's interventions has increased by 21.7 percent, while in other regions their number dropped by almost 25 percent. UNDP's efforts to advance engagement of women in local decision-making continued through the Women in Local Democracy project, where out of 107 female candidates who were trained in 2012, 66 were elected or re-elected.[68]

To fight corruption, UNDP has developed civil society's monitoring capacity and the capacity of the media to cover corruption issues. UNDP directly contributed to the development of national and sectoral strategies to fight corruption and systemic risks of corruption. UNDP helped develop the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2009–2012, organizing working groups of stakeholders, ensuring compliance with the requirements of UNCAC and conducting a comprehensive gap analysis. A particularly innovative approach has been used to engage volunteers in countrywide participatory monitoring of corruption risks in health and education sectors. The results of the monitoring have fed the development of an anti-corruption strategy at the Ministry of Education. This is a sensitive area of work in which UNDP has avoided controversies by focusing on the identification of systemic risks of corruption (not corruption cases) and by closely involving the relevant state institutions.

Under Outcome 7 **(communities and people have the capacities to claim their rights and participate in decision-making processes)**, UNDP has been particularly effective in increasing participation of youth in decision-making processes. A National Youth Aspirations Survey supported by UNDP became a crucial part of the Armenian National Youth Report 2011. The findings of the survey were discussed and validated through broad-based public dialogue. The report fed the development of the National Youth Strategy 2013–2017, also developed with support from UNDP. UNDP also played a crucial role in the establishment of the Youth Research Institute in 2013. The institute should contribute to evidence-based and participatory youth policymaking. UNDP is currently involved in drafting the new Youth Policy Concept. A factor contributing to the success was UNDP's ability to flexibly react to the Government's needs in terms of policy advice and high quality expertise.

In improving decision-making at the local level, UNDP has contributed to developing capacities of local governments and civil society to define priorities and design and implement community development projects in a participatory way. The geographic scope of the project has been limited to 20 communities. Moreover, due to corporate operational procedures and requirements, the programme was not able to operationalize the website, which would serve as a marketplace where the business community, public sector, NGOs and diaspora would present community projects for potential funding. Participatory decision-making at the local level has been promoted also within UNDP interventions implemented under the poverty reduction portfolio. The Women in Local Democracy project has successfully introduced the methodology of town hall meetings and SMS polling. Moreover, interventions implemented under the socio-economic governance portfolio also contribute to promoting participatory decision-making at the local level.

UNDP has also contributed to raising awareness and knowledge of the notions of human rights and tolerance among teachers and students. However, the extent to which human rights and tolerance are taught at schools has not been measured. A human rights education module on 'tolerance and diversity' has been introduced into the curricula of middle and high schools. Middle school teachers have been trained and teaching manuals distributed to schools. The manuals for high schools should be printed and distributed in 2014. There is anecdotal evidence of more tolerant student behaviour. Limitations include the

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68 Standard progress report January-December 2013.

fact that not all teachers and schools systematically teach the human rights module within their master teacher's classes, and high school teachers have not received training due to limited funding.

UNDP has supported a complex assessment of human rights education in the Armenian school system and the development of the National Human Rights Education Action Plan 2014–2017. This will ensure mainstreaming of human rights in all school textbooks and programmes. The action plan has yet to be approved by the Ministry of Education. UNDP success in terms of number of direct beneficiaries (teachers and their students) and in terms of the sustainability of the results has been made possible by focusing on the formal education sector.

Regarding media quality, initiatives were implemented to build media capacities to better cover and present corruption, tolerance and gender issues. Trainings were complemented by the support provided to the production of media outputs, thus creating opportunities to put the knowledge gained into practice. However, no credible data — other than perceptions — are available to assess the extent to which UNDP has been successful in improving media quality.

On local self-government, UNDP has implemented rather limited one-off activities to build the capacity of local bodies to proactively publish information as required by law, and to improve the access to information for vulnerable groups. The activities included awareness-raising on the right of access to information and capacity-building of local authorities to implement the Law on Freedom of Information in 17 communities.

In confidence-building and social cohesion, given the challenging political context in the region, the programme changed focus from confidence-building with neighbouring countries to promotion of social cohesion in Armenia. UNDP has thus focused on introducing the concept of social cohesion in national discourse on development priorities. A Survey on Social Cohesion has been conducted based on international standards,

establishing a baseline on social cohesion in Armenia. Broad public dialogue has been organized to discuss the findings of the study with the presence of media, to ensure visibility.

4.2.3 EFFICIENCY

UNDP initiatives under the democratic governance portfolio have been efficiently implemented and outputs for the most part have been timely delivered with adequate quality.

UNDP, in close collaboration with the European Union and EU member states, implemented a total of $57.971 million in programmes in the area of democratic governance during the period 2005–2013. The average annual delivery rate is 72 percent, lower than in the other thematic areas due to the significant increment of funding from the IBM project since 2013, as the Country Office was not yet ready to implement such high amount of funding with the same number of staff. This is still a relatively high delivery rate compared to other countries. A total of $273,494.98 (18 percent of the programme) was applied towards strengthening capacities and putting mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups — particularly people living with HIV. $27,515,152 (39 percent) was invested in improving structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels to ensure progressive realization of human rights — a large component from the IBM project (before IBM, this area was already responsible for 25 percent of the programme). $2,932,539.26 went towards building the capacity of communities and people to claim their rights and participate in decision-making.

The modality of a joint programme on HIV/AIDS, with pooled funds from different UN agencies, was an administrative burden, but it allowed the implementation of a project with a wider scope than would have been possible for a single agency. The joint HIV/AIDS programme proved to be administratively demanding; the partners found it difficult to reach agreement on procedures and methodologies, which slowed

the decision-making process. On the other hand, the pooled funds of different agencies made it possible not only to design and implement a large joint programme, but it also facilitated the task for the implementing partner, which had to deal with only one UN agency. All UN agencies participated actively in the design and implementation of the programme, which engendered a genuine partnership and helped forge a sense of shared accountability around common results. The joint programme reduced the duplication of work by sharing the background information and programmatic knowledge on HIV/AIDS of different UN agencies. Moreover, consulted sources provided unanimously positive feedback on the efficiency of UNDP's work, particularly for its high level of professionalism and transparent communication.

UNDP has, for the most part, delivered support to human rights and IBM efficiently through the quality of its human resources, its high level of transparency and its ability to contribute to stakeholder coordination. Democratic governance's largest share of overall UNDP spending is due to the start of the implementation in 2013 of the large infrastructural project Modernizing Border Cross Points with the budget of $52 million. UNDP has been chosen by the Government to implement the project due to its effective procurement procedures and expertise needed to manage the project. UNDP ensured efficient management of processes, good intra- and inter-agency cooperation, and information exchange between all agencies involved in border issues, both at the border and central level. Nevertheless, considering just the period 2005–2012, the democratic governance portfolio implemented almost 25 percent of the expenditures.

Regarding the mobilization of resources from other donors, UNDP has been mainly working with the European Union. UNDP was selected to implement two EU regional programmes (South Caucasus Anti-Drug Programme and South Caucasus Integrated Border Management Programme) because of its field presence in all three countries of the South Caucasus region

and its neutrality as a UN agency. UNDP's project management capacities and proximity to country partners both from the Government and civil society have also helped it to attract donor resources.

Although UNDP's monitoring and reporting systems are considered demanding by subcontractors in terms of frequency and details required, they are also considered justified and are seen as facilitating efficient project implementation. National partners have been consulted at each stage of a project cycle and there has been an open communication with the Country Office, ensuring a high level of transparency.

UNDP has also proved efficient in supporting the coordination of national stakeholders, in particular by organizing working groups with stakeholders from the Government and civil society. Support to the creation of national NGO networks on specific topics has also contributed to better coordination within the civil society sector.

However, in some cases, premature cessation due to a lack of funding or downscaling of activities by UNDP has produced inefficiency, generating weak capitalization on the investment. In gender, the funding for the Gender and Politics Programme ended before Parliament could adopt the Law on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities developed by the project. There have been no advocacy activities since 2009, which resulted in the loss of momentum. As a result, it took four years for the law to be adopted. The consulted sources believe that if UNDP had continued advocacy activities, the law would have been adopted much sooner.

In fighting corruption, UNDP has significantly downscaled its activities since 2009 and has not capitalized on the promising results achieved and partnerships built. Even though UNDP is well positioned as a neutral organization to fight corruption, it has not been able to mobilize donor resources for anti-corruption projects. This is partly due to the presence of another important donor in the sector: USAID. The

large scale of USAID's programme has made UNDP's contribution less relevant because it has not had sufficient core resources to make significant contributions.

In the Live Armenia initiative, UNDP's corporate operational procedures and requirements did not allow for the operationalization of a project's web platform. This negatively affected the achievement of results in the area of participatory decision-making. The issues related to linking the payment portal to UNDP Armenia's bank account, donor codes, payment application process, budgeting process, distribution of cumulative funds to targeted projects, reallocation in case of a short-fall in project funding and administrative expenses and transaction costs incurred throughout the process have not been resolved, despite the lengthy consultative process with UNDP Lebanon, the Bratislava Regional Centre, the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, the Bureau for External Relations and Advocacy, Treasury, and Legal Support Office.[69]

In the National Human Rights Education Action Plan, the Ministry of Education and Science's signature has been pending since the end of 2011. However, substantial progress has been made recently and the plan is expected to be signed in 2014.

4.2.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Under democratic governance, there is a high level of sustainability of results in HIV/AIDS, capacity development on human rights and human and drug trafficking, participatory youth policymaking and human rights education.

An HIV/AIDS prevention module was introduced in the curricula of the military academy and the capacities of a community-based organization of people living with HIV were strengthened. Results on human rights are well

embedded in national institutional structures with adequate national ownership of the results. However, the sustainability potential is low for the capacities built to engage in participatory decision-making at the local level; steps have not been taken to secure funding for projects developed by communities and project benefits have not materialized.

The module on HIV/AIDS prevention is taught as part of the military and police academies' medical preparation course using the manuals provided by the programme. The laboratories established under the Ministry of Defence are still operational and regularly conduct HIV testing. The capacities of the organizations serving people living with HIV have not only been preserved, but have been further developed. The NGO Real World Real People is now working with more than a half of the registered people living with HIV in Armenia, organizing awareness-raising and advocacy activities, providing information and facilitating self-help groups. The programme built the capacity of the NGO to continue to deliver the stream of benefits to people living with HIV after the programme's completion and to further develop its own capacities. The fact that Real World Real People is a community-based organization also contributed to the sustainability of the results.

UNDP contributed to developing national capacities of law enforcement agencies and the HRDO. Through continuous trainings at the Police Academy and Border Troops Training Centre, UNDP sustainably contributed to the fight against trafficking. The capacities of the HRDO were developed and preserved (despite staff turnover) through on-the-job training provided by senior staff, which proves the institution's maturity. UNDP has also supported the development of the HRDO's system for handing complaints, as well as a strategic plan for the period after the support ended, 2009–2012, as an exit strategy. The HRDO strategy for

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69   Note to file: Live Armenia – Project Marketplace.

2012–2016 was developed with the support of the European Union Advisory Group implemented by UNDP. A pool of trainers has been trained to provide human rights and gender trainings for civil servants. UNDP's methodology on engaging volunteers in monitoring of corruption risks has been replicated by USAID programmes and is still being used.

Results are well embedded in existing institutional structures and national ownership of results has been promoted as training modules on human rights and gender have been institutionalized in the civil servant national training system. No new parallel structures have been created within UNDP's projects, thus avoiding problems of hand-over and financial sustainability at the end of support. UNDP has tried to actively involve all stakeholders during the design and implementation of UNDP's interventions, thus promoting national ownership of the results. National ownership has been particularly crucial in the case of upstream projects aiming at developing and improving national policies and legislation.

All policy and legislative initiatives developed with UNDP support have been enacted. They include:

- amendments to the criminal code and criminal procedures code concerning human trafficking

- the National Action Plan on Human Trafficking 2007–2009

- amendments to the criminal code linked to the Law on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Administrative Code concerning the decriminalization of drug use

- the National Programme on Combating Drug Addiction and Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs 2009–2012

- the Strategy on Border Security and Integrated State Border Management and the Action Plan 2011–2015

- the State Gender Policy Concept

- the Law on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities

- the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2009–2012

In case of the National Programme on Combating Drug Addiction and Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs, a new programme for the period 2014–2024 has been drafted based on the example of the previous programme developed with UNDP support.

UNDP also achieved sustainable results in promoting youth participation in decision-making processes and human rights education. Results have been embedded in national structures, a concrete sign of national ownership. The results of the Youth Aspirations Survey have been integrated into the National Youth Report and supported the development of the National Youth Strategy. The sustainability prospects of the Youth Research Institute are also good. The Ministry has been very closely involved in the design and implementation of the project and additional budget has been allocated for the operational costs of the institute. The institute operates in an enabling policy environment as the principle of participatory evidence-based youth policymaking is enshrined in the National Youth Strategy. Researchers can directly use the knowledge gained through the trainings in their research projects; this contributes to the sustainability of the human capacities built within the institute. However, the inability of the institute to retain quality experts due to relatively low pay represents a risk that has not yet been addressed.

Another element of sustainability is the development of the National Human Rights Education Action Plan, which promotes mainstreaming of human rights in all school programmes. UNDP closely cooperated with the National Institute of Education. The assessment of human rights education in the Armenian school system with the participation of international experts and experts of the institute has helped to build capacities of the institute that are still used.

4.3 DISASTER, CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

Under the thematic area of disaster, crisis prevention and recovery, UNDP's contributions to the following outcome is assessed:

> National capacities for disaster risk management strengthened - CPD **Outcome 8**

Armenia is prone to a wide variety of natural disasters; some 80 percent of its inhabitants are at high risk of exposure to catastrophic events.[70] This risk was exemplified in 1988 when a powerful earthquake killed 25,000, left half a million people homeless and inflicted direct economic losses amounting to $14.2 billion.[71]

Anthropogenic impacts on the environment have greatly raised the hazard of natural disasters. The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction's 2009 Global Assessment Report included Armenia in the groups of countries with the highest relative economic loss and the worse economic resilience to natural hazards.

There are a number of man-made hazards present in Armenia as well, including the country's nuclear power plant, which sits in a high seismic zone close to the capital city. One of the technological hazards is the nuclear power plant due to its location in high-seismic zone and proximity to the capital city. Moreover, there are 26 hazardous chemical production facilities and 1,500 enterprises prone to explosions and fire.[72] However, the nuclear power plant is annually inspected and according to the Atomic Energy Agency, the plant is within an acceptable level of risk to environment.

Additional threats to the population stem from landmines and unexploded ordnances along the border of Azerbaijan and Armenia.[73] Mines serve as a barrier against intruders but at the same time, they impede socio-economic development of the impacted communities. The Landmine Impact Survey conducted by UNDP in 2005 identified 380 victims and at least 60 communities affected by landmines and unexploded ordnances.[74]

Disaster risk management (DRM) in Armenia has developed significantly over the last decade, starting with the recognition of the importance of DRR activities after Armenia joined the Hyogo Framework for Action[75] (HFA) in 2005. Decisions to establish the Ministry of Emergency Situations in 2008 and the National Platform[76] in 2010 are examples of the priority place on DRR by the Government. Previously, as in many countries, attention focused on the response component of disaster management.

DRR is now a priority within DRM. Armenia adopted a national strategy and action plan on DRR in 2012, and instituted regulatory and institutional changes to be better positioned to reduce risks and be prepared for disasters.

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70 UNISDR, 'Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction', 2009.

71 Government of Armenia, 'Disaster Risk Reduction National Strategy of the Republic of Armenia', March 2012.

72 UNDP, 'Armenia Disaster Risk Reduction System Capacity Development Report', Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery, February 2010.

73 Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor, 2006, at www.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?url=lm/2006/armenia.html.

74 UNDP Armenia Humanitarian Demining Project, 'Landmine Impact Survey', December 2005.

75 'Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters' is a global blueprint for disaster risk reduction efforts, adopted by 168 UN member states. It offers guiding principles, priorities for action, and practical means for achieving disaster resilience for vulnerable communities.

76 The National Platform is a coordinating mechanism for DRR activities in the country that ensures the implementation of HFA at national and local levels.

At the local level, DRR activities are gaining momentum. By 2014, 10 cities in Armenia,[77] including the capital, were participating in the UN campaign, 'Making Cities Resilient', which aims to strengthen local capacities in disaster planning. DRR regional teams were formed in 10 regions of the country to mainstream DRR into local planning.

There has been progress in disaster management in at-risk communities contaminated with land-mines and unexploded ordnances. The number of casualties has been declining since 2005, and one community in the Syunik region was cleared from landmines with European Commission funding. Clearing in more areas is planned with assistance from the United States. The Government of Armenia's DRM efforts are supported by a number of development actors, including UN agencies, the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, the European Union, USAID, GIZ, Japan International Cooperation Agency, the UK Department for International Development, NATO, OSCE, World Vision, Oxfam, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Save the Children, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, Médecins Sans Frontières, Counterpart International, Halo Trust and the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action. Almost all development actors support the Government in DRM at the national level. Most development actors assist the Government with policy advice and capacity building of national and local institutions.

Under Outcome 8, (**national capacities for disaster risk management strengthened**), UNDP aimed at bringing about change in the recovery of mine-affected communities, and building capacities of national counterparts on post-conflict disaster management and restoring livelihoods. Later, the initiatives covered the pre-disaster phase of DRM and focused on building capacities of national and local-level counterparts in disaster risk identification/analysis, mitigation and preparedness.

DRM initiatives initially fell under the democratic governance portfolio, but they were transferred to the environment portfolio. The first two DRR projects involved the Ministry of Territorial Administration[78] as an implementing partner; later, DRR projects were implemented by the Ministry of Emergency Situations. The humanitarian demining project was directly implemented by UNDP under the democratic governance portfolio.

4.3.1 RELEVANCE

Initiatives in DRR and mine action have been relevant and are in line with UNDP's mandate and the local population's need to live in a safe environment and have access to productive sources of income, such as pastures and croplands. However, mine action was not among the Government's highest priorities. Armenia's accession to the Mine Ban Treaty is contingent upon the readiness of Azerbaijan to adhere to the Convention and comply with its regime. Nonetheless, the Government was ready to release certain areas from landmines and actively sought international assistance.

The DRR initiatives were relevant to the country's priorities considering that Armenia joined the Hyogo Framework for Action in 2005 and "integrating into international structures for the monitoring and prevention of natural and man-made disasters" was stated in the National Security Strategy. It was also relevant to the existing needs of populations as they were highly vulnerable to disasters and risk reduction measures were few.

Disaster risk management approaches were based on the best practices and concepts adopted internationally. The programme followed the principles of the Hyogo Framework of Action for Building the Resilience of Nations and to a certain extent, humanitarian demining principles.

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77   Ministry of Emergency Situations, at www.mes.am/.

78   Before the establishment of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Department of Emergency Situations, which later was renamed the Armenian Rescue Service, was part of the Ministry of Territorial Administration.

The latter includes mine risk education, victims' assistance, demining activities, and socio-economic rehabilitation of mine-affected areas. Due to a lack of funds, victims' assistance component was minor.

4.3.2 EFFECTIVENESS

Under Outcome 8 **(national capacities for disaster risk management strengthened)**, UNDP has effectively contributed to the building of a functioning DRR system in Armenia, at both national and local levels, but DRR has not yet been fully mainstreamed in government strategies and plans. Positive developments relate to the Government's increased recognition of the importance of DRR, which is evident in the establishment of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the National Platform, and reporting on the implementation of Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).

UNDP helped to improve the policy environment as a result of adoption of DRR Strategy[79] and Action Plan and enhanced legislative frameworks for better implementation and coordination of DRR activities. With UNDP's involvement and advice, the Government revised and elaborated number of laws and concept notes that were passed to the Parliament for approval.[80] An important legislative provision concerns an amendment to the Law on Territorial Administration, which now requires consideration of DRM in the elaboration of community development plans.[81] This creates a better enabling environment for the implementation of the DRR strategy and HFA at the local level.

UNDP contributed to an improved institutional framework for DRM. DRR projects supported the establishment of the Crises Management Centre under the Ministry of Emergency Situations and its National Observatory for Disaster Data Statistics — a system for facilitating the systematic collection, integration, analysis and interpretation of disaster data for informing policy and decision-making processes.[82] UNDP also facilitated the establishment of a DRR National Platform for coordinating activities and incorporating DRR into development plans and programmes. DRR regional teams were put in place within the National Platform with the purpose of coordinating DRR activities at local levels and mainstreaming DRR into local development plans.

UNDP supported building the human and technical capacities of national institutions and assisted the Ministry of Emergency Situations to produce a Capacity Development Action Plan that guided the development of a national DRR framework. UNDP also provided support to building capacities of the National Platform by involving it in all UNDP-supported DRR activities, transferring DRR coordination functions[83] to the National Platform and training its members. Currently, the National Platform serves as a common mechanism for coordination of DRR activities in Armenia and is a vehicle for the implementation of the National DRR Strategy and HFA.

UNDP played an important role in building the technical capacities of the Crises Management Centre through the provision of trainings and equipment, and the development of unified databases for DRR institutions and GIS hazard maps. UNDP also provided support to the Public Information Centre of the Armenia Rescue Service under the Ministry of

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79 The development of the DRR Strategy and Action Plan was guided by the results of the studies conducted by UNDP.

80 With UNDP and other agencies' support, the DRR Education Concept Note and Concept Note on Rescue Volunteers were also developed and await passage by the Parliament.

81 Other amendments to the law clarify the functions of different agencies in DRM-related activities.

82 In order to integrate this work with the broader government administrative system, focal points representing the observatory were appointed in all 18 ministries.

83 Before the establishment of the National Platform in 2010, UNDP performed the coordination function in DRR.

Emergency Situations. The Crises Management State Academy[84] benefited greatly from UNDP's support, which included renovating the building, providing equipment for trainings, developing training modules and manuals, printing publications and enriching the DRR library.

UNDP's support to building the capacities of local-level institutions included developing and testing a Local-Level Risk Management training module in over 80 communities in Armenia. Representatives of regional and community institutions and community members gained practical knowledge and experience as a result of participating in local-level risk management activities and training sessions. UNDP also implemented pilot prevention/mitigation projects in 20 communities to demonstrate the importance of risk management to both local and national actors.

Armenia has become a model for disaster risk reduction in the region. UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery notes that, "lessons-learned and best practices are being shared with countries like Moldova, Montenegro, Tajikistan and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia."[85] A key factor in UNDP's effectiveness was the Government's commitment to instituting changes, especially within the Ministry of Emergency Situations. Other important contributors to success include national ownership of UNDP-supported activities, a clear map for development drawn from capacity needs assessments, and developed strategies and plans.

An example of a mitigation measure with multiple effects is found in the Lernansk community of Lori region. The community had suffered for years from the adverse effects of mudflows until the arrival of the UNDP-supported Local-Level Disaster Management initiative under the DRR project. In 2011, community members participated in a risk identification exercise, followed by an exercise in which they prioritized measures for reducing those risks. It became evident that one of the most important measures for reducing the population's vulnerability to mudflows was to build a quality bridge with a mudflow redirecting channel. Every year after the mudflows, community members used to build a new bridge manually using pipes and soil as a cover. Until construction of a new bridge was complete, farmers living on one side of the river could not use their cars to bring agricultural produce to the markets; neither could they use the community's heavy machinery for cultivating lands. During the mudflows, it was a common occurrence for children to miss school or to be cut off from their families, as they were unable to reach their homes. After a year, the new bridge and a mudflow-redirecting channel were constructed with UNDP assistance; car ownership noticeably increased as income from agriculture grew. The community installed street lightening, children enjoyed uninterrupted school attendance, and mothers, as the primary caretakers of those children, had more time for productive activities.[86]

DRR is not fully mainstreamed yet in the national and local development plans. The national platform, established two-and-a-half years ago, is responsible for DRR mainstreaming and the work in this direction is under way.

In the area of mine action, UNDP's support has been mostly effective. However, there have been

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84 The Crises Management State Academy is a state non-commercial organization of the Ministry of Emergency Situations. It conducts DRR training for national and local-level officials and specialists and the general population. It also supports educational institutions. Efforts are ongoing to convert this institution to a regional education hub on DRR for the Caucasus and Central Asia countries.

85 UNDP, 'Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery Annual Report 2011'. 'Region' as used here refers to the Central and Eastern Europe and CIS region.

86 There are other examples of how UNDP supported mitigation measures and helped communities to avoid or reduce devastating consequences of disasters. See, for example, www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5SngusdmuY and www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/crisispreventionandrecovery/successstories/undp-reducing-the-risk-of-disaster-in-armenia-.html.

challenges in building the Government's capacities to mobilize resources for the adoption of the mine action strategy that was developed within the humanitarian demining project. This was due to the withdrawal of donor funds.[87] On the positive side, UNDP has built the capacity of deminers and the Armenian Red Cross in humanitarian demining activities, provided information on contaminated areas through the Landmine Impact Survey, promoted awareness of affected communities about mine risks, and improved farmers' access to agricultural lands through demining activities in Shurnukh community of Syunik region.

4.3.3 EFFICIENCY

DRR standalone and mine action initiatives have been efficiently implemented and outputs for the most part have been timely delivered with adequate quality. UNDP has implemented about $4.4 million in programmes in the area of disaster risk management and recovery during the period 2005–2013, with an average annual delivery rate of 81 percent of budget timely executed.

UNDP established partnerships with various international organizations for the benefit of the projects and has successfully attracted additional resources. Thus the Humanitarian Demining project cooperated with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, which provided training, international expertise and contributed over $30,000 to the demining project. US RONCO Consulting Corporation paid for up to 270 man-work days to support the organization, implementation, analyses and reporting for the Landmine Impact Survey, with support totalling $200,000.

The efficiency of DRR projects is grounded in established synergies with the activities of many development agencies working in the field. It has been common practice to combine resources and share costs for joint activities, such as the production of educational or public relations materials and implementation of mitigation projects in various regions of Armenia. The UNDP-supported National Platform and regional DRR teams coordinate state and donor activities to avoid duplication. At local levels, DRR regional and community teams[88] are consulted by different donor and government agencies before starting development interventions.

DRR is not yet fully mainstreamed in UNDP Country Office initiatives. UNDP Armenia would benefit from increasing the knowledge and experience of managers who do not directly work with DRR issues.

4.3.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Under disaster risk management, UNDP's contributions have a high level of sustainability. The Government now specifically dedicates funds from the state budget to the newly established national-level institutions. Trained staff members continue to use provided software and resources and acquired knowledge in their daily activities. The revised institutional and legislative framework supports the implementation of DRR strategies and plans at national and local levels, and relevant state agencies are now responsible for the maintenance of structures rehabilitated by the small-scale UNDP projects on disaster mitigation, such as drainage canals.

With regard to upscaling pilot initiatives on disaster mitigation (e.g. drainage canals, anti-flood measures, anti-hail nets), there is interest among different communities, which may result in the replication of initiatives. Mitigation measures against hail are already being replicated by a few international development organizations, and the Ministry of Agriculture plans to subsidize communities in need of anti-hail nets.

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87 The European Commission was late in transferring funds for the humanitarian demining project, and it could not grant a no-cost extension because its Anti-Personnel Landmine budget line was closed in 2007.

88 These teams include regional/local-level administrators who became aware of DRR issues and activities in their communities.

Farmers from the landmine-cleared community in Syunik region continue to enjoy safe access to agricultural lands. The Armenian Red Cross continues to engage in mine action activities and benefits from its experience with UNDP. The Inter-agency Commission on Mine Action is still in place and conducts *ad hoc* meetings when needed.

4.4 ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Under the thematic area of environment and sustainable development, UNDP's contributions to the following outcome are assessed:

> Armenia is better able to address key environmental challenges, including climate change and natural resource management – CPD **Outcome 9**

In the early years of Armenia's transition from a centrally planned to a market-oriented economy, its environment suffered serious damage. The disruption in energy provision after the breakup of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s resulted in uncontrolled logging,[89] causing deforestation, erosion and soil degradation.[90] Overexploitation of the resources of Lake Sevan[91] resulted in the decline of water levels and decrease in fish stock.[92]

Some unsustainable practices continue. These include burning agricultural wastes in fields adjacent to forests, leading to forest fires and loss of biodiversity. Inappropriate agricultural practices result in salinization of soils and erosion, and improper handling and disposal of industrial wastes causes high levels of pollution.[93]

Armenia faces challenges posed by global climate change as well. The country is highly vulnerable to climate change and is already experiencing an increase in temperatures and a decline in precipitation,[94] which contributes to desertification and forest fires. This, in turn, results in the decline in agricultural productivity and loss of vegetation and wildlife.

To address environmental degradation, the Government of Armenia has elaborated and begun implementing the Sustainable Development Programme and the 2nd National Environmental Action Plan. The Government has also adopted other strategic programmes and over 15 laws regulating the environmental sector.

These measures, some of which are ongoing, yielded positive results. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), harmful gases responsible for ozone layer destruction, were phased out in Armenia by 2010. The number of projects implemented under the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol is growing and includes the Nubarashen and Lusakert projects for reducing the impact of hazardous wastes. Lake Sevan's water level increased by 3.6 metres since 2001, matching the level in 1963. However, the water-level rise resulted in flooding in nearby woodland areas, which gave rise to another problem: eutrophication. The Government now invests considerable resources to clear waterlogged areas. More positive developments relate to the rehabilitation of irrigation systems to prevent water losses, construction and/or rehabilitation of several wastewater treatment systems, collection and recycling of PET waste, promotion of reforestation throughout the country, the expansion

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89   During this period, 50 percent of household energy for heating and other purposes came from fuel wood.

90   United Nations 'United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2005-2009, Armenia'.

91   Lake Sevan is the biggest alpine lake in the Caucasus; its catchment basin occupies one sixth of the total territory of Armenia.

92   Government of Armenia, 'Rio+20 National Assessment Report', 2012.

93   UNDP, 'Country Programme Action Plan between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and UNDP 2010-2015'.

94   Meteorological data show an increase of temperatures in Armenia by 0.85 degrees and decrease of precipitation by 6 percent over the last 80 years.

of protected areas, and better conservation of endangered species.

Government efforts in conservation and sustainable use of natural resources are supported by a number of international organizations. These include UN agencies, WWF, the Caucasus Nature Fund, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, the Armenia Tree Project Charitable Foundation,[95] the Regional Environmental Centre, the European Union, USAID, OSCE, GIZ, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Under Outcome 9 **(Armenia is better able to address key environment challenges, including climate change and natural resources management)**, UNDP planned to assist the Government to fulfil its global and regional obligations and strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. The initiatives developed and implemented focus on:

- ozone layer protection
- climate change
- biodiversity
- waters
- multifocal projects

Interventions had two main components: building human/institutional capacities and strengthening the enabling environment for sustainable development.

Ozone initiatives were expected to focus on meeting the requirements of the Montreal Protocol[96]

for phasing out ozone-depleting substances. Most initiatives are linked to the GEF-funded Programme for Phasing Out Ozone-Depleting Substances. One project that focused on a management plan for phasing out hydro chlorofluorocarbons, funded by the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol,[97] was a continuation of a previously funded programme. Projects were implemented by the National Ozone Unit[98] of the Ministry of Nature Protection.

Climate change initiatives focused on helping Armenia respond to the requirements of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including formulating and implementing programmes with measures to mitigate[99] climate change, and developing and periodically updating national inventories of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and removals. The UNFCCC also commits countries to prepare for and facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change. UNDP's climate change-related initiatives in Armenia fall into four groups: (1) enabling activities aimed at assistance for development of National Communication and technology transfer needs assessment; (2) climate change mitigation projects, including renewable energy and energy efficiency projects; (3) adaptation projects; and (4) other measures.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives were aimed at mitigating climate change risks of rural communities through improved local development planning, and protecting mountain ecosystems through implementing climate change adaptation measures.

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95 The Armenia Tree Project is non-profit organization based in the United States, with offices in Yerevan and Watertown, Massachusetts.

96 One of the requirements of this protocol was to phase CFCs, the most harmful ozone depleting gases, by 2010.

97 Armenia changed its status to a developing country in 2006 and became eligible for financing from the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol. The Fund is a financial mechanism for allowing developing countries to implement activities to phase out ozone-depleting substances.

98 The unit was established in January 2005 under the Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia and is funded by UNIDO.

99 Mitigation is essential to meet the UNFCCC's objective of stabilizing GHG concentrations in the atmosphere. Mitigation measures include those that either reduce GHG emissions and/or enhance sinks and reservoirs, e.g. reforestation.

Energy efficiency projects were aimed at reducing GHG emissions by promoting and improving access to energy-efficient services. Initiatives focused on municipal heating and hot water supply; improving energy efficiency in buildings; and manufacturing, importing, certifying and using new, energy-efficient materials and equipment in the construction sector.

Support for the preparation of UNFCCC National Communications was to include:

- the preparation of National Communication reports[100]

- an updated GHG inventory

- formulation of project proposals on mitigation and adaptation to climate change

- implementation of a regional study on climate change

- preparation of amendments to the Air Protection Law banning the burning of agricultural waste in fields

- assistance for the development of a legal framework for Kyoto Protocol implementation and establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Council on Climate Change

- development of awareness-raising materials

- provision of trainings

- updating and redesigning of climate change information centre website

Biodiversity initiatives aimed at responding to the requirements of the Convention on Biological Diversity by assisting in the preparation of the third and fourth reports required under the Convention. Two ongoing projects addressed biodiversity conservation issues in the country's protected areas system. A project on catalysing the financial sustainability of Armenia's protected areas system was to support measures to increase cost-effectiveness

of site management. Planned activities focused on initiating technical audits and providing guidance, providing training and support to business plan preparation, assessing returns on investment, implementing cost-accounting and financial reporting. The objective of the Developing the Protected Area System project was to promote the expansion of nature reserves and enable active conservation of biodiversity.

Water ecosystems initiatives include a regional project executed by the UN Office for Project Services on reducing trans-boundary degradation in the Kura-Arks River Basin and Lake Seven Coastal Zone Cleaning. Main components were to conduct a trans-boundary diagnostic analysis; develop integrated water resource management plans; implement demonstration projects on ecological flows and rapid river ecosystem assessment; develop a strategic action programme for the basin; and clear flooded woodlands in the Lake Sevan coastal zone in order to prevent eutrophication and ensure water quality.

Multifocal areas initiatives included economic valuation of ecosystem services; developing institutional and legal capacity to optimize information and monitoring system for global environmental management; developing regulatory framework for strengthening environmental management; and the GEF-supported Small Grants Programme, which funded 39 projects in both urban and rural areas to enhance capacities of civil society organizations and community-level stakeholders in addressing global environmental issues.

4.4.1 RELEVANCE

UNDP contributions under the thematic area of environment and sustainable development in helping the Government address key environmental challenges, including access to energy services, climate change and natural resources

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100   The first National Communication was prepared and submitted in 1998. The second was prepared in 2008 and the preparation of the third one is underway.

management, were relevant and aligned with the country's needs and national priorities. Armenia is signatory to a number of global environmental conventions, protocols and treaties, including the UNFCCC, the Montreal Protocol, and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The country has adopted numerous policies, strategy documents and action plans for sustainable development. The most prominent are the Sustainable Development Programme for the period 2008–2012, the Armenia Development Strategy 2013–2025 and the second National Environmental Action Plan. Ensuring energy security is one of the priorities of the National Security Strategy as well.[101] Improving energy efficiency and promoting sustainable energy sources help to both improve the country's energy security and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Programme interventions were relevant to UNDP's mandate as well. They were aimed at addressing capacity-building needs, strengthening the enabling environment and promoting the adoption of sustainable development practices.

Programme approaches such as generating demand for sustainable services, transferring knowledge and technology, building capacity at national and local levels, encouraging international cooperation and establishing partnerships were all relevant for addressing Armenia's key needs and challenges. Relevant initiatives supported by UNDP relate to:

■ the development and adoption of national policies and tools for implementing and complying with international environmental agreements

■ introduction and mainstreaming of sustainable development principles in national environmental policy frameworks

■ introduction of sustainable development principles into education curricula

■ strengthening of national and local capacities to develop innovative policies and practices to address climate change mitigation and adaptation

■ development and implementation of innovative policies and practices for environmentally sound, energy-efficient technologies and clean production

4.4.2 EFFECTIVENESS

Over a nine-year period, as measured by the Environmental Performance Index, Armenia improved its performance by 8 percent, largely due to the improvements in access to drinking water, household air quality and pesticide regulation. However, this indicator does not capture UNDP's relevant and effective contributions.[102] This indicator used by UNDP to measure contributions to this outcome is produced biannually by researchers at Yale and Columbia universities, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum. It aims to measure a country's achievement of policy targets using data sets and indicators consistent for all countries at the national level. (If an indicator target is met, that country receives a score of 100.) The target set for UNDP's environmental portfolio mentions the improvement in rank by 5 points over one programme cycle, 2010–2015. However, the improved ranking does not imply improved performance. Performance itself, not ranking, is a more appropriate measure of progress.

The assessment of UNDP's effectiveness in the environment and sustainable development portfolio aligned with areas of UNDP's interventions:

■ multi-area interventions on improving the framework for sustainable development

■ ozone layer protection

■ climate change

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101   Republic of Armenia, 'National Security Strategy', 2007.

102   A few Environmental Performance Index indicators (e.g. indicators for biodiversity and habitat, climate and energy, forests, water resources) did not show any improvement. This is because the index uses only a limited number of indicators for which information is easily available.

- biodiversity
- water ecosystems

Under multi-area interventions, UNDP contributed effectively to developing frameworks for strengthening environmental management. UNDP assisted the Government in developing the second National Environmental Action Programme for the period 2008–2012. This strategic document provided a framework for sustainable natural resource management. It also identified gaps, a set of measures, and the roles of different government agencies for their implementation. The National Environmental Action Programme served as a guide for the Government and donor agencies for making investment decisions in the area of the environment.

Furthermore, UNDP assisted the Government in developing legal frameworks in the area of information and monitoring systems for global environmental management. The Government developed 35 regulations, and changed and amended the fundamental environmental codes and laws (three codes and six laws). UNDP successfully introduced the concept of economic valuation of ecosystem services and its applications in the country. This concept is already incorporated in the draft Framework Law on Environmental Protection, and in the new strategic framework entitled, 'Concept on Establishing Innovative Economic and Fiscal Mechanisms in Environmental Sector'.

UNDP also significantly contributed to the enhancement of national human and institutional capacities for addressing environmental issues. It provided policy advice and capacity-building support to the National Council on Sustainable Development, which is involved in the development of strategies and programmes for improving environmental governance. Council members, Government officials, parliamentarians and local-level officials were trained

on sustainable development issues. These initiatives contributed to strengthening institutional frameworks and capacity for monitoring and information management. Environmental information management and monitoring standards, norms, procedures and information technology architectures were upgraded to meet current national and international environmental information and monitoring needs. All relevant institutions changed their charters in accordance with the amendments made to legislative acts, and training curricula were developed and integrated in in-service training system for public servants.

UNDP also contributed to the enhancement of local capacities to address environmental issues. As a pilot project, UNDP assisted the municipality of Kajaran in the Syunik region with the development of Local Environmental Action Plans. Development of such plans helps communities to build their capacities in identifying environmental problems and planning appropriate measures. As a result of the developed plan for Kajaran city, the municipality was able to attract additional financing from the state budget for solving local environmental issues. Additionally, under UNDP's Small Grants Programme, 39 small-scale projects[103] were implemented in Armenia in close cooperation with environmental NGOs, local governments and community-based organizations. These projects covered the areas of biodiversity, waters, climate change, land degradation and chemicals, and helped to build local capacities to address environmental issues.

On ozone layer protection, UNDP enabled the Government to meet its commitments under the Montreal Protocol[104] on CFC phase-out. The Montreal Protocol required the elimination of CFCs by 2010. Armenia, which is a signatory to the Montreal Protocol, met this requirement successfully: in 2010, it eliminated the

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103   Twenty projects were implemented in rural areas.
104   An international treaty for the elimination of ozone-destroying gases.

consumption of CFCs. This was largely due to UNDP assistance to the National Ozone Unit in implementing the programme on CFC phase-out. The programme involved training almost all refrigeration technicians (712) on recovery/recycling of refrigerants in the refrigeration and air conditioning subsectors. It also offered an awareness and incentive programme to enterprises in the commercial and industrial refrigeration end-user sectors for replacing their equipment with ozone-depleting potential with refrigerants that have little or no ozone-depleting potential. UNDP also supported the installation of technologies with low ozone-depleting potential at the only enterprise in the country manufacturing commercial-use refrigeration equipment, and with offering new technologies to Yerevan Household Chemistry Plant. Work is ongoing to satisfy the Montreal Protocol's requirement on hydrochlorofluorocarbons phase-out.

UNDP enabled the Government to implement the requirements of the UNFCCC. With UNDP's assistance, Armenia submitted its second National Communications report to the UNFCCC in 2010 and prepared a GHG inventory[105] following the requirement of UNFCCC Article 4.1. The country contributed to the reduction of GHG emissions, which is the ultimate objective of UNFCCC. This was made possible through improved access to energy-efficient services and improving energy efficiency in buildings. To promote these concepts and services, UNDP implemented 21 pilot projects on cogeneration district heating, heat-only district heating, solar panel installation and energy efficiency technologies. UNDP also conducted 11 prefeasibility and eight feasibility studies, drafted regulations supporting implementation of effective municipal district heating projects and worked with the Government to adopt and register 14 EU standards on energy efficiency. UNDP helped with manufacturing, importing,

certifying and using new energy-efficient materials and equipment in the construction sector through training sessions; seminars; and the production of manuals, brochures, catalogues and public relations materials.

Armenia is today better placed to contribute to further reduction of GHG emissions through participation in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol. UNDP's climate change team assisted the Government in the development of a legal framework for Kyoto Protocol implementation. The team also assisted with the development of internal procedures for the designated national authority for the revision and approval of CDM project documentation. UNDP helped with the submission of CDM projects for approval and clarification of conditions of specific CDM projects. Furthermore, UNDP supported the calculation of carbon dioxide emission factors for the country's electricity system, and conducted feasibility studies for potential CDM projects.

National capacities were developed for adaptive management of mountain forest ecosystems. This was done through the implementation of pilot adaptation measures including pest management, management of forest fires, and forest regeneration activities. Staff was trained on adaptive forest management and on forest fire management. Additionally, UNDP assisted with establishment of the inter-ministerial coordination for fire prevention and helped to amend the Air Protection Law, banning agricultural waste burning in fields.

Moreover, UNDP enabled the Government to implement the requirements of the Convention on Biological Diversity. UNDP assisted the preparation of the third and fourth reports to the Convention in 2005 and 2008, respectively. With UNDP's financial and technical support, the

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105 The GHG inventory served as the main reference document for making amendments to the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Law and Building Code. The Government Programme 2014 also used this document to address climate change mitigation issues in the construction sector.

protected areas system was expanded by 38,828 hectares. The Law on Specially Protected Natural Areas was fully revised to enable communities to participate in protected areas management. Other amendments concern establishing and managing Specially Protected Natural Areas and conservation regimes. Furthermore, UNDP assisted the management of three newly established protected areas in the development of guidelines and norms, and in the development of protected area management models and business plans. UNDP also provided trainings to sanctuary managers and community members.

In water ecosystems, UNDP promoted cooperation among the concerned countries on trans-boundary degradation of the Kura-Araks river basin. UNDP's involvement was mostly limited to providing general oversight and facilitating project implementation in the country. The main implementing agency was the UNDP/GEF project team headquartered in Tbilisi, Georgia. The regional initiative is not yet finished[106] and it is unclear whether the Government of Armenia will approve the main strategic document. Nevertheless, Armenia benefited from participating in a trans-boundary diagnostic analysis, in the development of the management plan for Arpa river basin, and in the implementation of two pilot projects (ecological flows and rapid river ecosystem assessment).

UNDP also helped the Government to clarify problems with the flooded woodland clearing operations in regards to the cleaning of Lake Sevan. Based on clearing operations in some 82.5 hectares of waterlogged areas, UNDP provided recommendations to the Government for improving procurement requirements to the operators for conducting further clearing operations. The revision of procurement requirements for Lake Sevan cleaning operations is ongoing, and to some extent, the Government has already considered UNDP-produced recommendations.

4.4.3 EFFICIENCY

Environment and sustainable development initiatives have been efficiently implemented and outputs for the most part have been timely delivered with adequate quality. UNDP executed a total of $12 million in programmes in the area of environment and sustainable development during the period 2005–2013, with an average annual delivery rate of 86 percent of budget timely executed. There were some delays in the implementation of a few projects but they did not significantly influence the results.

Environment and sustainable development programmes established synergies with other organizations, which helped improve the efficiency of UNDP's operations by leveraging financing from different sources. Many examples of synergies can be found in the projects implemented under the Small Grants Programme, as well as in the areas of ozone, climate change and biodiversity. For example, a municipal heating project leveraged private investment for the provision of cogeneration-based heating services, and a climate change adaptation project successfully leveraged resources and expertise from OSCE in implementing a forest fire management component. A component of the project on forest pest management leveraged resources from the Caucasus Nature Fund. All 39 projects implemented under the Small Grants Programme leveraged resources and expertise from NGOs, donor agencies and local governments.

4.4.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Under the environment outcome, there is a high level of sustainability of outcomes with strong national ownership of results, enhanced capacity and improved legislation/regulations support to the continuation of UNDP-implemented initiatives and achieved results. Environment and sustainable development portfolio interventions promoted the participation

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106   The project was completed in July 2014.

of national stakeholders in project planning and implementation, built human and institutional capacities, and made improvements in legal/regulatory frameworks.

The Armenia Development Strategy for 2013–2025 stresses the importance of sustainable development through building a resource-efficient economy, implementing the national water programme, providing support to the development and implementation of environmental plans by local self-governing bodies, and continuing improvements of the management system of Specially Protected Natural Areas.

Energy-efficiency initiatives are scaling up. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy in Armenia, and a cogeneration plant in the Avan district of Yerevan plans to expand its operations. The Government is currently allocating resources for improving the energy efficiency of public buildings. Recently, Armenia joined the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environmental Partnership, which is dedicated to accelerating the implementation of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.

Chapter 5

STRATEGIC POSITION OF UNDP

UNDP's strategic positioning is assessed in this chapter according to three dimensions: (i) strategic relevance and responsiveness; (ii) making the most of comparative strengths; and (iii) promoting UN values from a human development perspective. These three dimensions are related and together allow an assessment of UNDP's overall strategic position in the country.

5.1 ASSESSING STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND RESPONSIVENESS

UNDP has been a relevant and a responsive partner operating in proper alignment with national needs and government priorities. UNDP has made coherent and pertinent contributions, informing and strengthening the Government in the development and implementation of national development strategies and policies, and empowering civil society to claim its rights and participate in decision-making.

UNDP has been responsive to the evolution of development challenges, priorities and significant shifts due to conflicts, disasters preparedness and financial crisis. Approaches and intervention modalities, for the most part, have been consistent with the interest of the stakeholders, and there has been a conscious effort to promote national implementation of projects. UNDP supports implementation of initiatives, but the national counterparts take the lead and share accountability for implementation with UNDP, securing national ownership of results and enhancing the potential for sustainability.

The level of engagement with national stakeholders demonstrates a clear strategy to promote national ownership and strategically positions UNDP to be able to respond adequately to long-term development goals. From consultations with main stakeholders, it was evident that there is dialogue between UNDP and partners at the highest levels of decision-making and at various levels of implementation. This close day-to-day relationship (e.g. shared facilities in the Ministry of Environment) also places UNDP in a privileged position to respond to short-term objectives. UNDP thus emerges as a key partner in promoting Armenia's participation in the highest levels of dialogues in international forums (i.e. Rio+20), providing expertise and specialized skills, and mobilizing resources to ensure Armenia is represented and contributes to global dialogues and exchanges.

However, some government stakeholders voiced a need for increased transparency and more frequent and inclusive consultations on the process of identifying and selecting programme themes and beneficiaries, and prioritizing resource allocation. Improved transparency and consultations would enable the Government to better coordinate aid with other stakeholders and would, most importantly, further enhance shared accountability, national ownership and sustainability of results.

UNDP consults the various ministries as multi-year development assistance frameworks (UNDAF/CPDs) are developed. However, after programme approval, UNDP mostly engages with the immediate implementation partners to discuss progress of initiatives and new ideas. These more frequent consultations do not always include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (in most cases, the coordination focal point), the Prime Minister's Office, or the Ministry of Economy and other stakeholders that could facilitate enhanced aid coordination on the part of the Government with other stakeholders and foster synergic exchange.

The Government requests further clarification on the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in approving financial reports (of programmes) and on the need to hold more regular consultations with UNDP to monitor the progress and implementation of programmes. Beyond the roles of the national directors at the deputy ministerial level for each portfolio, the Government feels the need to discuss additional oversight modalities.

It is not clear how increased consultation can positively or negatively affect UNDP's neutrality, efficiency and, in particular, timely delivery of development results contributions. Nevertheless, UNDP should strategically consider, further discuss with stakeholders, and determine the ideal frequency and inclusiveness of consultations to best help the Government monitor, coordinate and leverage international development efforts, while ensuring that UNDP has the flexibility needed to foster innovation and ensure value for money and timely contributions to development.

The evaluation found that when not able to further mobilize funds to engage in long-term downstream initiatives, UNDP has been able to redirect approaches and partner with different stakeholders for support in some areas with upstream engagement.

On some occasions, UNDP has responded to requests for short-term assistance (participation in international forums) but has mostly been able to dedicate attention to activities aimed at long-term development results. Partners regard UNDP as a relevant and strategic partner to have involved or at arm's reach to consult, even if there is no funding available (e.g. human rights, DRR).

UNDP has particularly demonstrated its strategic position in the ability to foster debate on key development issues, successfully supporting formulation or reform of public policies and strategies and strengthening the capacities of national institutions. UNDP has made concrete contributions in the areas of gender, equal rights and equal opportunities; human rights; vocational education; municipal service system; human

trafficking; disaster risk reduction; partnership development with the diaspora; criminal code; decriminalization of drug use; integrated border management and security; anti-corruption; SMEs; community development; HIV/AIDS; climate change; energy efficiency; national environment; migration management; protected areas; mine action; and regional cooperation in river basin management.

UNDP has developed a strategic partnership with the European Union in supporting the transfer of EU know-how and best practices in a number of policy areas. In particular, UNDP has contributed to the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy reform agenda by the Government of Armenia in the areas of legal, security, democratic, economic and institutional issues through the EU Advisory Group project. UNDP has also satisfactorily implemented the EU-financed regional South Caucasus programmes on integrated border management and drug control — initiatives with significant budgets and results.

Given Armenia's middle-income-country status, UNDP has struggled to mobilize funding and diversify sources. Recently, it successfully expanded cooperation with the Government in cost-sharing (IBM); however, staff understands the need to further diversify funding sources. Now that UNDP Armenia has sufficient resource to consider more strategic investments, it is able to pursue new funding sources with less pressure.

On the other hand, the evaluation found that even when UNDP is not able to contribute with financial resources, its continuous engagement is still valued and influential. Donors are likely to have more confidence in initiatives when UNDP is involved. At times, UNDP is even able to attract additional funding for national partners, like NGOs (e.g. pollutants, human trafficking and DRR).

Belying initial expectations, partnerships with the Armenian diaspora have not been significantly broadened. Some interviewed partners feel the

need for continuous and persistent work to raise awareness on how the diaspora could best cooperate with UNDP for development. However, further investment in this area should be considered with caution given that previous consultations with diaspora groups on opportunities for possible partnerships brought few results. There is no evidence that future efforts would bring significant results considering the limited corporate expertise in working with diaspora, the sensitivity of Armenia-diaspora relations, the fact that the diaspora is not homogenous, and the various groups and generations with diverse agendas.

5.2 UNDP'S COMPARATIVE STRENGTHS

UNDP's comparative strengths are generally its technical and managerial capacities to effectively implement projects, provide policy advice, and offer its global network of experts on human development issues to transfer knowledge and technology for development.

In Armenia, UNDP's additional strengths are demonstrated in its:

- strong relationship with specific ministries through its portfolio directors

- long-term engagement with key civil society organizations (e.g. the International Centre for Human Development, the Association of Women with University Education, the Association for Sustainable Human Development)

- outreach to local governments and communities through project presence (Support to Small Medium Enterprise Development, the Gender and Politics Programme, Women in Local Democracy, Municipal Heating, the Small Grants Programme and Community Development)

- convening power to call upon other strategic stakeholders to partner and make joint, at times sensitive, statements (i.e. gender equality)

- administrative capacity that allows for piloting and testing new models of service delivery or other innovative solutions to existing challenges

- good understanding of the socio-economic and cultural context due to its long presence in the country and close collaboration with national and local governments

With regard to coordination and role sharing within the UN system, UNDP provides funding for the UN Coordination Office and engages in inter-agency coordination groups and joint projects. Currently, UNDP leads the UNDAF thematic groups on democratic governance, and environment and disaster management. Additionally, UNDP provides support to the UNCT as an administrative agent responsible for contracts and the procurement processes of some of the other agencies.

On an inter-agency programme level, UNDP worked with joint projects on HIV/AIDS, sustainable livelihood, DevInfo, DRR and the environment. To a lesser extent, UNDP engaged in other inter-agency initiatives that were not full-fledged projects but promoted opportunities for exchange of knowledge and synergic engagements among the agencies.

Most recently, UNDP also coordinated with the UN system to support the agriculture census — Armenia's first since independence. This census will establish key benchmarks for the country's most important economic sector.

Another collaborative effort was the UN's work on the post-2015 process. Using a 'town hall' approach, the UN in Armenia held a series of national consultations in all regions of the country. The consultations engaged all sectors of society, but focused particularly on the grass-roots level. The consultations concluded that Armenians prioritize reducing severe inequalities, producing employment strategies for young people and improving governance.

UNDP also collaborated with the UN system by focusing on integrating a human rights-based approach to help the Government create its first National Human Rights Action Plan based on a national Human Rights Strategy developed in collaboration with the UN.

UNDP also created a social innovation lab (with support from UNICEF), which served as an incubator for young people creating social ventures — the first of its kind in the region. With the lab's help, ventures promoted the inclusion of people with disabilities, rural development, and the empowerment of women. Specific projects included a web-based childcare sourcing venture and a dried-fruit production centre. All ventures focused on poor rural areas, and all were conceived, designed and managed by youth.

Armenia faces challenges posed by the many young unemployed people who feel socially excluded and are migrating to seek job opportunities. Responding to these challenges, UNDP and other UN agencies successfully helped Armenia to join the UN Secretary-General's 'Action Plan on Youth'. The UN focused on creating economic opportunities for youth and fostering a sense of social inclusion through social entrepreneurship, youth camps, internship programmes, vocational educational training and engagement with the Ministry of Youth and Sport.

Since 2008, UNDP coordinated with the UNCT to strengthen the coordination mechanisms of government DRR actors and to enhance the UN's own disaster preparedness and response capacities.

Since 2009, the United Nations Volunteers programme has worked with UNDP and collaborated with the Ministry of Labour. Volunteers have worked in areas of youth career development, community development, environmental awareness, garbage clean-up, media on Armenia diaspora, Middle Eastern Armenian communities, the non-processed food market, human security, adaptive forest management and community exchange.

Operationally, yet another of UNDP's comparative advantages is its position as the Global Fund and GEF implementing partner. UNDP assisted Armenia to access $10 million in financing from the GEF for projects implemented during 2005–2013. UNDP proved to be well positioned to facilitate access to other sources of financing, such as the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund and the Kyoto Protocol's CDM. Through its support in fund management to agencies such as the GEF and the Global Fund, UNDP played an important partnership role, mobilizing networks and knowledge.

UNDP has not yet fully engaged in supporting a coordinated and integrated strategy for South-South cooperation, or East-East cooperation as it is known in the region. The term South-South cooperation, (even if referred to as East-East cooperation), is political terminology that is not appreciated or well accepted among some national stakeholders. There have been several engagements for knowledge transfers between Armenia and other countries. However, with the exception of IBM and the Aid for Trade initiatives, these engagements have not resulted in full-fledged East-East cooperation characterized by exchange of interests and benefits that generate or contribute to equitable and sustainable development results.

South-South/East-East cooperation is not a priority for the Government, but some national stakeholders indicated interest. There is evidence in some areas that Armenia could further engage in South-South/East-East cooperation, not only as a recipient, but as a contributor of knowledge, for example, in areas of DRR. The Government may not have the necessary funds to engage in South-South/East-East cooperation, but UNDP could explore alternative scenarios of triangular cooperation.

In terms of regional engagement, UNDP Armenia has effectively worked with the Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS at Headquarters in New York and the Regional Service Centre in Bratislava to draw on its comparative strengths

from the corporate global and regional network of experts to ensure that relevant and up-to-date practices were used in programme execution.

In 2013, UNDP announced that it would close its Regional Service Centre in Bratislava and open a new centre in Istanbul in 2014. The Government of Armenia informed evaluators that it has "no intention to collaborate in any way technical or program related with UNDP Regional Service Centre in Istanbul, given the fact that boarders in both countries are closed due to diplomatic relations with Turkey." It was agreed that the UNDP programme in Armenia would continue to be supported from UNDP Headquarters in New York. It is too soon to assess if this new arrangement will affect results, but key stakeholders raised concern that this situation affects UNDP's relationship with the Government. According to the Regional Bureau, to address concerns, technical and policy support arrangements will be provided through UNDP's global and other regional hubs under the new Bureau for Policy and Programme Support in New York. The new bureau's structure in New York and in the regions around the globe are still being defined through UNDP's structural change exercise, which is part of UNDP's larger commitment to its Executive Board to improve institutional effectiveness to meet Strategic Plan objectives.

5.3 PROMOTION OF UN VALUES FROM A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

UNDP plays an important role in communicating and working with the Government to promote the implementation of international agreements and to follow up on issues of human development and human rights. UNDP's corporate goal, at the highest level, is to contribute to the attainment of goals embodied in the Millennium Declaration: equality, solidarity, freedom, shared responsibility, tolerance and respect for nature. UNDP is committed to

supporting the realization of those values around the world. The effort to attain the MDGs should be fundamentally owned by the Government. UNDP has effectively assisted the Government in this endeavour.

UNDP is known as a credible partner of the Armenian national authorities in substantive and high-level policy dialogue on human development issues, and on politically sensitive themes like migration, gender equality,[107] human rights, drug use and tolerance. UNDP's neutrality, long presence in the country and many partnerships strategically position it as a unique convening power to foster debate and to engage with various parties on sensitive issues. Bringing national institutions together to work on issues of common interest, UNDP democratically fosters policy dialogue and the development agenda with flexible, inclusive and participatory approaches aligned with UN values, such as human development, gender equality and equity.

The focus on human development and social indicators is of particular interest for Armenia's development strategies. The regional and the national human development report on migration made a significant contribution to Armenia, serving as basis for the Government's policy formulation in migration management.

In terms of contribution to gender equality, for the most part, UNDP programmes have been designed to appropriately incorporate in each outcome area contributions to the attainment of gender equality (e.g. improved access to services, civic participation, income generation, empowerment and political representation, gender equality policy, training of women in politics, capacity building of women to generate income from sustainable agriculture, integration of gender concerns in DRR and other areas).

There is a growing conscious effort to mainstream a gender perspective in UNDP programmes.

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107   Response to the attacks against gender rights activists and the Ombudsman's office on key human rights issues.

However, gender mainstreaming is at times perceived as artificial and minimalistic — an additional layer of requirements and generally considered last. UNDP in Armenia still lacks a clear strategy with a theory of change for how addressing gender could effectively fast track development and improve and generate not only gender-responsive but gender-transformative results that can address cultural roles, stereotypes and power structures.

UNDP projects and activities are increasingly gender mainstreamed. This reflects a UNDP approach advocated by Headquarters and pursued by gender focal points who train UNDP staff and partners. Gender analysis is now increasingly conducted at different stages of programming and project implementation.

The majority of interviewees consulted for the evaluation considered that there are no significant gender problems in Armenia; women are perceived to have equal opportunities as men and in some sectors there are more women than men — including in UNDP. In some cases, when consulted in more depth, it was clear that some interviewees confused gender equality with sexual-orientation issues. In 2013, a campaign against homosexuality exposed Armenian society's unclear understanding about what gender equality means. Gender experts and UNDP stakeholders working on gender equality and sexual orientation issues considered this episode a significant setback to the progress thought to have been achieved in equality and tolerance.

Gender mainstreaming in the Armenia Country Office is guided and aligned with strategic programmatic interventions identified in the corporate Gender Equality Strategy. There are minimum measures in place for considering gender concerns in project cycles and some cross-practice coordination. The Country Office is currently developing a specific gender equality strategy to be consistently applied in the next programing cycle.

The progress on gender mainstreaming becomes clear when comparing both programmatic cycles. In the first programming cycle (2005–2009), only one out of the nine outcomes referenced women or explicitly addressed gender. The second programme (2010–2015) shows significant improvement, with one outcome specifically mentioning women and five out of nine outcomes addressing vulnerable groups, including women.

The project document appraisal process has increasingly included gender screening and benchmarking against programming guidelines and there is improvement in the programming/project documents incorporating gender-responsive objectives and indicators. Most projects have at least aimed at ensuring equal participation and/or equal sharing of benefits between women and men.

The gender marker[108] is being adapted in Armenia to serve as an 'inclusion marker', which considers not only gender equality and women's empowerment, but other aspects of inclusion. Some people do not understand the concept of gender very well, so this has been an alternative way to address related issues. But regardless of the communication approach, a clear understanding of the theory of change still needs to be specifically thought through for gender equality and women's empowerment to move from gender-responsive[109] towards gender-transformative[110] results.

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108   The gender marker is a tool that assigns humanitarian projects a score on a scale from 0-2 based on project design. A well-designed project that intentionally takes account of the needs of women/girls and men/boys is more likely to support all of these groups and improve their lives.

109   Gender responsive results recognize the distinct roles and contributions of different people based on their gender, takes these differences into account and attempts to ensure that women and girls equitably benefit from interventions. Changes often respond to inequalities in the lives of women or men within a given social, economic and/or political setting, and aim to remedy these inequities without addressing the root causes.

110   Gender transformative results explicitly seek to redefine and transform gender norms and relationships to redress existing inequalities and discriminations in social, economic and political structures, norms, institutions and relations. The aim is to transform the systems and institutions where inequalities are created and maintained; this involves redistribution of power, control and resources.

In terms of partnerships, the Country Office has collaborated with the national gender machinery, key line ministries and women's organizations on substantive gender issues. UNDP has also made significant contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment in the inter-agency gender thematic group, which is an extended group including other development partners, civil society and the Government.

UNDP has also contributed significantly to empowering and building the capacity of women to run for local office. Some female elected local officials specifically attribute their election to trainings delivered by UNDP and partners, such as the Association of Women with University Education. The women who do not attribute their election directly to UNDP nonetheless indicate that trainings delivered in partnership with UNDP helped them feel more empowered to run for office.

Even though there is no gender focal team in the office led by a senior officer, as recommended in the corporate Gender Equality Strategy, the Country Office has made relevant progress in gender mainstreaming. Factors influencing successful gender mainstreaming are the active inter-agency gender team that includes all UN agencies and non-UN stakeholders, and the UNDP gender focal point in the Country Office that ensures all corporate instruments are put to use. However, while the UNDP gender focal point is knowledgeable and respected, the position comes with no clear terms of reference, annual action plan or specifically allocated budget for non-project-related gender activities.

The evaluation did not assessed individual capacities, but the proxies below indicate that the staff should have at least a basic understanding of gender mainstreaming. Most staff have completed the UNDP online courses, 'Gender Journey' and 'Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment

and Abuse of Authority.' Of the 151 people employed in the Armenia Country Office, 128 took the courses. Orientation on UNDP's commitment to gender equality has been integrated into informal induction processes for new appointees. The Country Office website also reflects gender equality and the office has come close to achieving gender parity as more than 40 percent of staff are female (but not at all levels).

Corporate policies for gender equality in the workplace have been properly considered, indicating an enabling environment for gender equality. Nevertheless, the 2013 Global Staff Survey indicated some gender gaps to be monitored in the future. (UNDP only started disaggregating the data by sex in 2013, so it is not yet possible to observe a trend.) According to the 2013 survey, 71 percent of female staff feel their job provides a chance to have their ideas adopted and put to use, as opposed to 90 percent of male staff; 95 percent of male staff feel their job provides an opportunity to do challenging and interesting work, as opposed to 75 percent of female staff. Fewer women (70 percent) than men (85 percent) feel UNDP has an environment of openness and trust; 71 percent of women compared to 85 percent of men feel the workload is distributed fairly in the office, and 61 percent of women compared to 70 percent of men feel that the management team effectively manages conflict and grievances in the office. The 2012 Global Staff Survey results also indicate less favorable answers coming from women. These results could not be verified with further inquiries, but the anonymity of the Global Staff Survey lends some credibility to these indications and they deserve future monitoring.

Addressing equity issues, UNDP has developed and used mechanisms to foster inclusiveness, but efforts have not been consistent in focusing on the most vulnerable or disadvantaged segment of society. At times, funding opportunities took priority over targeted groups.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents conclusions regarding UNDP's performance and contributions to development results in Armenia from 2005 to 2013, and presents recommendations, based on the findings presented in chapters 4 and 5, for further discussion with stakeholders.

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

1. The Government of Armenia and civil society consider UNDP a reliable and responsive development partner, relevant and strategically positioned to support Armenia's development through its strong relationship with the Government, long-term engagement with key civil society organizations, effective outreach to local governments and communities through project presence, and unique convening power to foster dialogue on key and sensitive development issues.

UNDP has demonstrated its strategic positioning as well as its technical and managerial capacities in its ability to:

- support formulation or reform of national public policies and strategies

- develop and strengthen national institutional capacities

- implement large and complex projects

- administer resources

- pilot new models of innovative solutions

UNDP's country-led approaches have been particularly relevant to promote shared accountability among the Government and civil society and to foster sustainability and national ownership of results.

2. UNDP has made relevant contributions to national development outcomes as planned in the Country Programme Documents (CPD I 2005–2009 and CPD II 2010–2015).

Significant contributions are the support provided to the Government, civil society and the private sector to:

- debate issues and promote democratic participatory decision-making

- strengthen regulatory frameworks, mechanisms and national systems of data collection

- draft and implement national policies, strategies and programmes to reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable group

- enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness by strengthening institutional capacities to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups

- improve structures and mechanisms to ensure the progressive realization of human rights protection, gender equality and responses to HIV/AIDS

- fight human and drug trafficking

- fight corruption

- build a functioning disaster risk reduction system, at both national and local levels

- help Armenia fulfil global and regional environmental obligations

- strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources

3. UNDP has generally engaged and worked well with national stakeholders, but it is well positioned to promote more frequent and inclusive consultation, particularly with government counterparts, to better help the Government coordinate and leverage international development efforts.

According to the Country Office, the communication with national directors, outcome boards and mid-term reviews are the entry points for UNDP's continuous consultation with the Government. Nonetheless, in some instances, UNDP has not sufficiently engaged with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Therefore, further discussion is needed to redefine how UNDP can more frequently and inclusively promote consultations. Doing so could help ensure alignment with overall national priorities (not only individual organizations' priorities); increase transparency in resource allocation, progress and implementation of programmes; facilitate enhanced aid coordination; and foster synergic exchange.

4. From 2005 to 2015, UNDP was expected to contribute to 18 outcomes with several projects and outputs. The excessive number of initiatives presents a major challenge for a Country Office that has a limited number of staff and scarce resources for comprehensive implementation, synergic cross-practice collaboration and adequate monitoring and evaluation.

Some of the projects are poorly classified as carried from one cycle to the other and reported under outcomes and programme areas that are not ideal for communication purposes, especially at the aggregated level in corporate structures (Integrated Work Plan, Results Oriented Annual Report and Administrator's Annual Report). Certain outcomes (1 and 3 of the last cycle) have very few ongoing projects. Other outcomes (5 and 7 of the last cycle) address very similar issues and it is difficult to report and differentiate their separate value additions. Some benchmarks are loosely designed, some targets set in an unrealistic way, and some indicators inappropriate to measure and value UNDP strategic contributions.

5. There is great potential to further leverage the IBM initiatives to promote stronger programmatic synergies in other development areas, such as trade, local development, poverty reduction, human rights, migration and good relations with neighbouring countries. Its programmatic potential has not been fully explored yet.

UNDP has been successful in mobilizing resources and expanding cost-sharing for IBM initiatives. However, it is not clearly articulated how the IBM initiatives will contribute to human rights (the outcome it is currently classified under) and other development areas. This may impede the achievement of more significant results in areas that are not the main focus of IBM, but have equal strategic potential to advance development in Armenia with an appropriate cross-cutting/mainstreaming approach.

6. UNDP has not fully distilled and disseminated lessons from achievements, innovations and challenges in developing pilot programmes and testing new approaches, and how these can affect or enhance development policies, knowledge management and learning. These lessons could be useful for scaling up and replication of programmes and approaches.

Alone, UNDP has limited potential to influence poverty and other national-level development impact indicators. Nevertheless, when the knowledge of its successfully piloted projects and approaches is adequately disseminated, there have been cases of replications with a greater potential to influence impact indicators and policies (i.e. dry fruit productions, replicated by Oxfam; start-ups, replicated by USAID; agriculture cooperatives, scaled up by World Bank and the Ministry of Agriculture; corruption risk monitoring by civil society, replicated by USAID). UNDP has accomplished much in Armenia and different donors and partners mentioned interest in having more of this information properly documented for consultation and upscaling of investments.

7. UNDP has successfully supported national efforts to address gender inequality at a policy level in Armenia, and has progressed in mainstreaming a gender-responsive and human rights-based approach in the programme. However, some corporate benchmarks still require actions and focus on transformational change.

UNDP has contributed to the development of gender-related legislation, capacity building and awareness raising, making the Armenia Country Office a good candidate to strive towards receiving a UNDP gender equality seal[111] if it chooses to apply for one. However, the Country Office still lacks a few benchmarks for compliance with the Gender Equality Strategy and the Gender Parity Strategy.

8. UNDP has mainstreamed disaster risk reduction in the area of environment and sustainable development well, but further mainstreaming is needed across all UNDP initiatives in Armenia.

Currently, DRR considerations are incorporated into some UNDP projects. However, Armenia is prone to disasters and DRR is an essential ingredient of the country's sustainable development. Further capacity building and advocacy efforts to reinforce the culture of DRR could accelerate its mainstreaming not only in the UNDP programme, but also in government policies and programmes. Such efforts could also help save resources. UNDP's in-house expertise from the standalone DRR initiatives is well positioned to help increase capacity of all UNDP programme managers for further DRR mainstreaming.

9. Despite significant efforts, results-based management and outcome monitoring and evaluation could better and more timely feed into decision-making, learning and course

corrections, and could more strategically contribute to outcome-level development results.

Efforts to monitor UNDP's work in Armenia have been significant and corporate reporting should be commended for the quality of the information presented. Nevertheless, the results-based management approach, indicators, baselines and targets were not always adequate to manage and measure outcome-level contribution and indicate UNDP's value added in contributing to development results. Limited outcome evaluations were conducted. The use of independent findings could have increased the credibility of corporate reporting. Moreover, the use of impact indicators to measure UNDP's contributions to the outcomes is not always appropriate. Changes in impact indicators depend on many variables, require multifaceted long-term approaches and multiple contributions from different stakeholders. The use of these indicators to measure UNDP's contributions or progress towards the outcomes can be misleading. Moreover, they can misrepresent UNDP's efforts and contributions that could be positive but perhaps not yet significant to document change at a national level.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. UNDP should hold further discussions with Government stakeholders to redefine a more consultative relationship with regard to strategic prioritization of resources and identification and selection of programme themes and beneficiaries. Equally important would be to define with the Government ways to ensure that UNDP's neutrality, efficiency and effectiveness is not compromised, and that mechanisms are put in place to allow UNDP the flexibility needed to foster innovation, ensure value for money, and make timely and efficient contributions to sustainable development.

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111   The Gender Equality Seal is a corporate certification process that recognizes good performance of UNDP Country Offices in delivering transformational gender equality results. The Gender Equality Seal establishes minimum acceptable quality standards and is a useful assessment tool that helps managers to link workplace policies and development results for effective gender mainstreaming.

In redefining a closer relationship with more frequent and inclusive consultations, UNDP would be able to continue to support the Government to:

- coordinate and leverage international development efforts

- ensure full alignment with strategic national needs, challenges and investment priorities

- enhance transparency of the allocation of resources managed by UNDP

- better monitor the progress and implementation of programmes with the appropriate oversight mechanisms

- further enhance joint accountability, national ownership and sustainability of results

2. UNDP Armenia should develop the next programme with a focus on fewer and more specific, realistic and strategically targeted outcomes, narrowing the range of activities accordingly.

UNDP should prioritize initiatives in which it can bring added value and in which costs can be shared by strategic national partners to ensure national ownership and sustainability of results. The programme should also enhance sustainability and develop exit strategies that start with the agreement that national partners must be able to continue to sustain or produce results after UNDP withdraws. For adequate attention and focus on sustainability, there should be fewer expected programme outcomes to report on, with a greater focus on a programme approach that is nationally owned and aligned with national needs, UNDP's mandate and government priorities.

3. UNDP should further capitalize on the opportunities brought by the IBM initiatives and develop a well-articulated strategy in close cooperation with the National Security Council and other stakeholders to leverage synergies with interrelated development issues and diversify funding sources with a conscious technical and value-for-money strategy.

UNDP already predicts IBM advancing in directions such as human rights, migration, economic development, poverty reduction, job creation, trade and good relations with neighbouring countries. However, it could use a coherently developed theory of change and an articulated partnership strategy with practical plans and approaches to map opportunities, needs, risks, assumptions and cost to ensure concrete results.

4. UNDP should make further efforts to effectively document and disseminate its successful experiences and lessons learned in programme approaches and initiatives, particularly the successful pilot ones.

UNDP should systematically collect, document and assess critical lessons drawn particularly from pilot initiatives and innovative approaches — both achievements and challenges, and how they have or could influence policy and development. A relevant added value of UNDP is its track record of best practices and standards. Documenting lessons learned can make even cases of failure valuable if they can be used for consultation and to promote learning and enhanced future investments. UNDP should consider annually reporting to the Government and civil society on contributions to results. In cases of failure, UNDP should consider reporting on the lessons learned.

5. UNDP Armenia should strive to adopt a more holistic, sustained, long-term and multipronged approach to more fully and explicitly integrating gender equality components into all areas of work. UNDP should focus not only on gender-responsive, but on gender-transformative contributions that can fast track development and address power relations and cultural structures.

UNDP Armenia should develop a gender equality strategy and action plan that translates management accountability into clearer strategies and actions for gender mainstreaming. UNDP is also encouraged to have a clear and costed annual action plan dedicated to supporting at

least gender mainstreaming in the programme if not enough funding is available for specific gender equality and women's empowerment initiatives. Moreover, the appraisal of project documents must formally include not only the mandatory gender screening, but also benchmarking against gender equality and women's empowerment programming guidelines. This approach should be designed into projects at the formulation stage and be verified through the project appraisal, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation stages.

6. As Armenia is prone to disasters, UNDP should explore how to further integrate and mainstream DRR into all its programmes and initiatives.

Mainstreaming DRR would require further incorporation of DRR into programming activities, including during project document design and appraisal processes so more UNDP programmes and projects include relevant sector-specific DRR indicators. Mainstreaming DRR would also require further capacity building of UNDP programme managers so that staff members can better understand the need for DRR mainstreaming and better engage with national and local-level stakeholders to promote DRR issues. Finally, mainstreaming DRR will require better communication of results by the standalone DRR projects so that UNDP programme managers can take full advantage of in-house expertise and further augment the project's results.

7. UNDP should further improve results-based management and programme monitoring and evaluation at the outcome level. It should work with coherent and comprehensive theories of change to map assumptions and ensure that complex contexts and the multifaceted nature of development are considered to contribute to development, behavioural and transformational change.

Particular attention should be paid to the indicators used to monitor UNDP's contributions to outcomes. Impact indicators used to measure national progress based on national statistics can be misleading and may misrepresent positive contributions from UNDP, which alone can rarely influence national statistics. Ranks should also be avoided as targets; the calculation of indices often changes and change in ranking does not always mean progress. Moreover, UNDP should commission more independent evaluations, particularly outcome evaluations, to timely feed (achievements, lessons, challenges) into decision-making, to document learning, indicate change in courses when necessary and use the independent findings for more credible corporate reporting and analysis.

Annex 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducts country evaluations called, 'Assessments of Development Results' (ADRs) to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of UNDP's contributions to development results at the country level, as well as the effectiveness of UNDP's strategy in facilitating and leveraging national effort for achieving development results. The purpose of an ADR is to:

■ Provide substantive support to the Administrator's accountability function in reporting to the Executive Board.

■ Support greater UNDP accountability to national stakeholders and partners in the programme country.

■ Serve as a means of quality assurance for UNDP interventions at the country level.

■ Contribute to learning at corporate, regional and country levels.

ADRs are independent evaluations carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy.[112] The IEO is independent of UNDP management, headed by a Director who reports to the UNDP Executive Board through the UNDP Administrator. The responsibility of the IEO is two-fold: (a) provide the Executive Board with valid and credible information from evaluations for corporate accountability, decision-making and improvement; and

(b) enhance the independence, credibility and utility of the evaluation function, and its coherence, harmonization and alignment in support of UN reform and national ownership. Based on the principle of national ownership, the IEO seeks to conduct ADRs in collaboration with the national Government.

This is the first ADR for Armenia and will be conducted in 2014 with a view to contributing to the preparation of the new UNDP country programme as well as the forthcoming United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The evaluation will cover UNDP activities undertaken under the ongoing Country Programme 2010–2015 as well as those undertaken under the framework of the past Country Programme 2005–2009.

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Republic of Armenia is a unitary, multiparty, democratic nation-state, in the southern Caucasus, at the juncture between Europe and Asia. The country is bordered by Turkey to the west, Georgia to the north and Azerbaijan to the east, and Iran and the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhchivan to the south.

Despite economic progress in recent years, poverty is still significant in the country; unemployment affects a significant portion of the labour force, with rates especially high outside the capital and among youth. Outward migration, particularly of the young, is a serious development challenge.

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112   See UNDP Evaluation Policy: www.undp.org/eo/documents/Evaluation-Policy.pdf. The ADR will also be conducted in adherence to the Norms and the Standards and the ethical Code of Conduct established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (www.uneval.org).

Reforms have stimulated some growth, but the economy still remains narrowly based. Deficiencies in the business environment are a particular challenge for small and medium-sized firms.

In October 2011, the Government established a special Regulatory Reform Unit to perform a regulatory guillotine exercise to simplify and streamline the legal framework along with various regulations.

On gender, a new Law on Equal Rights and Opportunities was adopted but there is still some confusion around gender concepts with parts of society vulnerable to misconceptions between gender equality and gender identity.

Forest protection and energy efficiency are a national priority. There is work on improving legislative framework for the environment with a combination of policy, legal, regulatory, and institutional reforms. However, Armenia still faces an emerging supply gap, the need to maintain energy supply reliability, and affordable tariffs.

Armenia is at high risk of climate change, with lower precipitation, higher temperatures and more extreme events predicted. Land conservation and biodiversity preservation are also challenges. Inadequate waste management poses danger to public health and the environment. This climate volatility increases the urgency to invest in disaster preparedness to reduce vulnerability and promote adaptation, so a National Disaster Risk and Recovery Strategy (DRR) is at the implementation stage with integration of DRR principles into state security and sustainable development strategies.

Border security is also a high national priority. The Border Security and Integrated State Border Management Strategy was endorsed by the National Security Council and approved by a Presidential Decree in 2010. The Government is initiating a comprehensive customs reform process, to address and amend border-crossing procedures.

The Government is currently discussing a new Armenia Development Strategy for the period until 2025. The document aims to be a strategic roadmap for medium-term national socio-economic development objectives, modified as a result of the impact of the global economic crisis on Armenia. The Strategy should indicate key priorities for UNDP to align with the next programming cycle.

3. UNDP PROGRAMME STRATEGY IN ARMENIA

Country Programme 2005–2009

During the implementation of the programme cycle 2005–2009, a system of national directors was put in place at the deputy ministerial level entrusting the Government with the overall guidance and coordination of UNDP projects and programmes, aimed at promoting stronger ownership of UNDP programmes. Assigning such functions at the highest possible level was expected to secure alignment with national development priorities and policies. Effort was to be made to avoid fragmentation in projects and use of resources, and the programme was being streamlined to ensure consistency and impact around the two main development priorities for the period: to ensure citizens' participation and to address inequalities.

Efforts to mainstream climate change and gender equality were made in development planning and policymaking. Efforts to promote human rights and to strengthen the Human Rights Defender's Office were also aligned to set the basis for integrating a rights-based approach into UNDP initiatives.

In **socio-economic governance**, the concept of human development was promoted and integrated into national strategies, including the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Local governance and local economic development initiatives were aimed at contributing to poverty reduction and regional disparities, and to improve civil engagement and participation. The establishment of a municipal service system

was being supported to establish a body of professional, trained and legally protected municipal servants, to improve the delivery of basic services in communities. The introduction of strategic planning and performance budgeting at the municipal level was to provide an entry point and mechanism for enhancing the planning and monitoring capacities of elected authorities, and for ensuring transparency and accountability in public service delivery. UNDP worked to rehabilitate social and economic infrastructure and generate sustainable income in more than 150 rural and urban communities using participatory, community-based models. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were provided with business services, introduction of innovative funding mechanisms and capacity-building. Investments channelled through public-private partnerships were aimed at improving community-based public services as well. UNDP also worked with diaspora partners to introduce innovative income-generation schemes and to rehabilitate social and economic infrastructure.

In **democratic governance**, UNDP interventions aimed at promoting and protecting human rights, including fighting corruption, drug and human trafficking. During the 2005–2009 cycle, UNDP worked on the strengthening of the institutional capacity of the Human Rights Defender's Office, establishing a tolerance centre and initiatives around the concept. Recommendations of assessments of institutional frameworks, existing policies and capacities were incorporated in the Anti-trafficking National Action Plan to improve institutional response and harmonize drug-related legislation. In support of the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), a gap analysis on the compatibility of national legislation and procedures with UNCAC requirements was conducted. Recommendations from this gap analysis were presented for incorporation into the national anti-corruption strategy and policy documents.

In **environmental governance**, UNDP activities aimed at the development of regulatory frameworks for strengthening environmental management to ensure adherence to sustainable development practices. Policy papers, analytical studies, recommendations and pilot activities were being developed and conducted to: (a) improve legislative frameworks to increase energy efficiency; (b) introduce new technologies for renewable energy; (c) rehabilitate municipal heat and water supply systems, (d) enhance national capacity to meet global climate change commitments, and (e) develop climate change adaptation programmes in vulnerable sectors, as well as mainstream adequate climate change response measures into national development activities. UNDP worked with Government to revise and update national environmental policy as an initial platform for broader policy/programme development and coordination towards achievement of MDG and PRSP targets, while integrating the concept of sustainable development into national strategies and plans. Furthermore, a local Environmental Action Plan was developed and under implementation aimed at strengthening abilities of pilot communities to solve local environmental concerns and reduce threats to the population's health, the ecosystem, and the economy.

During the same period (2005–2009) UNDP worked on several cross-cutting areas:

a) In **HIV/AIDS**, UNDP worked with partners to facilitate multisectoral responses. Legislative and policy frameworks were introduced, an HIV/AIDS prevention system was established in penitentiaries, and police units and the military and at-risk groups participated in prevention activities. UNDP used the PRSP process to increase public awareness of HIV/AIDS and to mainstream HIV/AIDS issues into the policy document.

b) In **disaster management,** UNDP launched a capacity-building programme to strengthen the national disaster preparedness and risk reduction system. A local-level risk management module was piloted in the Ararat region to strengthen the information management capacity of the Armenian Rescue

Service. UNDP also worked with the UN Country Team on disaster preparedness and response efforts.

c) In **climate change,** UNDP undertook pilot activities to address adaptation planning in Armenia at community, regional and national levels. These included climate proofing in Lusadzor community and assessments of climate change impact.

d) In **gender**, UNDP worked on building the capacity of leading public institutions. A gap analysis of legislation through a gender lens was conducted to contribute to the development of legislation on equal rights and equal opportunities, and countrywide public awareness campaigns aimed at combating gender stereotypes.

Country Programme 2010–2015

During the implementation of the programme cycle 2010–2015, resource mobilization remained a major challenge. UNDP decided there was a need to streamline its activities to use scarce resources more effectively. In line with the UNDAF[113], UNDP decided to focus on four national priorities: 1) ensure access to enhanced economic opportunities; 2) increase the capacity of citizens to participate and exercise their rights and responsibilities, and of government institutions to comply with their obligations; 3) ensure access to quality social services; and 4) improve effective management of natural resources.

In **social-economic governance**, UNDP aimed at contributing to the achievement of four outcomes:

■ *Reduce disparities between regions and specific socio-economic groups. (1)* Innovative and diversified income-generating practices in local communities were to be developed. Regulatory frameworks and mechanisms to revitalize strengthened SMEs continued.

■ *Increase access of vulnerable groups to economic opportunities. (2)* Market-oriented vocational education training and life-long education initiatives were to provide skills and knowledge to targeted beneficiaries. UNDP would help to develop policies and practices on public private partnerships (PPP) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) to promote private-sector engagement.

■ *Assist to strengthen national systems of data collection, reporting and monitoring of human development. (3)* Capacities of national and local institutions were to be strengthened to collect, update, analyse and manage disaggregated socio-economic data for evidence-based policymaking.

■ *Improve the capacity of local government bodies to ensure transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. (6)* Legal and institutional frameworks to promote decentralization were to be strengthened. Capacities of local government bodies, municipal servants and regional authorities in targeted communities were expected to increase.

In **democratic governance**, UNDP aimed at contributing to the achievement of three outcomes:

■ *Strengthen institutional capacities and mechanisms to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups. (4)* Governmental institutions and bodies were to be strengthened to develop and implement social protection services and social policies.

■ *Improve structures and mechanisms at different levels to ensure the progressive realization of human rights. (5)* Support to the Human Rights Defender's Office was to be expanded, promoting a rights-based approach and the protection of human rights in line with international commitments. Support to public institutions in meeting international anti-corruption commitments was to continue. Capacities to manage borders and migration,

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113   United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

to combat trafficking and effectively protect rights of migrants were to be enhanced. In cooperation with other partners, formulation and implementation of national policies that protect women's rights and promote women's empowerment in decision-making were to be supported. And key child protection bodies at various levels were to be strengthened to protect the rights of children and to implement the Convention on the Rights of Child.

■ *Assist communities and people to have the capacities to claim their rights and participate in decision-making processes. (7)* UNDP was to concentrate on strengthening participatory mechanisms to develop, implement and monitor strategic policies and programmes at national, regional and local levels. Initiatives were to help expand citizens' access to information. The capacities of the media were to be improved to provide quality information. Awareness and knowledge of human rights were to be mainstreamed in curricula for both formal and non-formal education. Emphasis was to be put on promoting tolerance awareness and expanding the capacity of citizens to monitor policies and programmes. And UNDP was to support and advocate for confidence building and dialogue on various levels in cooperation with local and international partners.

In **environmental governance**, UNDP aimed at contributing to the achievement of two outcomes:

■ *Address key environmental challenges including climate change adaptation and mitigation and natural resource management. (9)* UNDP was to support the development and introduction of policy frameworks to ensure conservation and sustainable use of national resources at national and local levels, including climate change adaptation and mitigation. UNDP was to support the introduction of instruments to ensure the implementation of national environment policies and the fulfilment of international obligations. UNDP was in particular to instruct the development of innovative policies and practices for

environmentally sound and energy-efficient technologies, promoting the application of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Clean Development Mechanism and assisting in negotiations on post-Kyoto financial mechanisms.

■ *Strengthen national capacities for disaster risk management. (8)* Emphasis was to be put on identifying climate-related risks, assessing the economic impact of climate change, inclusion of adaptation and mitigation measures in national and local policies and supporting monitoring and mapping mechanisms to enhance early-warning systems.

Recognizing the need to integrate human rights into all aspects of its work, UNDP was to continue to push forward the use of a rights-based approach. In each area of cooperation, UNDP was also expected to implement programmes that: (a) helped the Government, as a principal duty bearer, protect the rights of citizens; (b) created an enabling environment for the achievement of rights; and (c) strengthened the capacity of citizens to exercise their rights. Where appropriate, UNDP was to draw on its global network to ensure that relevant and up-to-date practices were used in programme implementation.

During this current programming cycle, in terms of programme management, UNDP continued to focus on the use of national execution as the main modality for programme management. However, the Country Office continued to provide extensive operational backstopping for national executing agencies. To reach resource mobilization targets, a comprehensive strategy was to be adopted aiming at cost-sharing by the Government and generating additional donor support.

For the coming programme cycle, one particular concern was raised over the fact that the UNDAF/CPD cycle does not match the government cycle and that may interfere with the new programming process, adding to the challenge of having to operate under this changing political environment, posing risk to future programming.

4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The scope of the evaluation will cover UNDP initiatives undertaken under the ongoing Country Programme 2010–2015 as well as those undertaken under the framework of the past Country Programme 2005–2009. Between the two periods, there is a large degree of coherence in the programme structure and continuity in many projects. Therefore, the assessment will not be presented with two programme frameworks as separate ones, but as a continuous programme using the structure of the current country programme for presentation purpose. (See Tables A1.1 and A1.2)

Table A1.1. Country Programme Outcomes and Budget (2010–2015)	
Country Programme Outcome	**Budget (in US$)**
Outcome 1	National policies, strategies and programmes reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups.	5,900,000
Outcome 2	Vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia.	5,493,000
Outcome 3	National systems of data collection, reporting and monitoring of human development strengthened.	600,000
Outcome 4	Institutional capacities strengthened and mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups.	1,200,000
Outcome 5	Improved structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels ensure the progressive realization of human rights.	5,700,000
Outcome 6	Capacity at different levels of governance to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness is improved.	3,350,000
Outcome 7	Communities and people have the capacities to claim their rights and participate in decision-making processes.	4,240,000
Outcome 8	National capacities for disaster risk management strengthened.	1,600,000
Outcome 9	Armenia is better able to address key environmental challenges including climate change and natural resource management.	9,060,000
Total		37,143,000

Source: UNDP Armenia Country Programme Document 2010–2015

Table A1.2. Country Programme Outcomes and Budget (2005–2009)	
Country Programme Outcome	**Budget (in US$)**
Outcome 1	The national social monitoring system is expanded and strengthened.	1,300,000
Outcome 2	Innovative income-generation schemes and mechanisms are introduced.	4,800,000
Outcome 3	Disaster management and recovery in at-risk communities is strengthened.	1,200,000
Outcome 4	Multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS are strengthened.	872,000
Outcome 5	Governing institutions with policy, oversight and electoral functions are strengthened.	2,000,000
Outcome 6	Participatory policymaking among targeted groups is promoted.	2,000,000
Outcome 7	Respect for, and the awareness of human rights, including women's rights, is increased.	5,100,000
Outcome 8	The conservation and sustainable use of natural resources is strengthened.	4,600,000
Outcome 9	Access to sustainable energy services is increased.	3,400,000
Total		25,272,000

Source: UNDP Armenia Country Programme Document 2005–2009

The evaluation is both retrospective and prospective. Retrospectively, the ADR will assess UNDP's contribution to the national efforts in addressing development challenges in four thematic/programmatic areas (poverty reduction and MDGs, disaster, crisis prevention and recovery, democratic governance, and environment and sustainable development) and provide conclusions on UNDP's overall performance and on each of the country programme outcomes. It will assess key results, anticipated and unanticipated, positive and negative, and will cover UNDP assistance funded from both core and non-core resources. The evaluation also looks ahead to examine how UNDP can support Armenia in strengthening national institutions and processes in the next cycle.

5. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation has two main components: (a) the analysis of the UNDP's contribution to development results through its programme outcomes and (b) the strategy UNDP has adopted to enhance contribution to development results in Armenia. For each component, the ADR will present its findings and assessment according to the set criteria provided below. Further elaboration of the criteria will be found in the 'ADR Manual 2011'. Further elaboration of evaluation questions will be found in Annex 2.

UNDP's contribution by thematic/programmatic areas. Analysis will be made on the contribution of UNDP to development results of Armenia through its programme activities. The analysis will be presented by thematic/programme areas and according to the following criteria:

- **Relevance** of UNDP's projects and outcomes to the country's needs and national priorities

- **Effectiveness** of UNDP interventions in terms of achieving intended programme outcomes

- **Efficiency** of UNDP's interventions in terms of use of human and financial resources

- **Sustainability** of the results to which UNDP contributed

UNDP's contribution through its strategic positioning. The positioning and strategies of UNDP are analysed both from the perspective of the organization's mandate[114] and the development needs and priorities in the country as agreed and as they emerged. This would entail systematic analyses of UNDP's place and niche within the development and policy space in the country, as well as strategies used by UNDP to maximize its contribution through adopting relevant strategies and approaches. The following criteria will be applied:

- **Relevance and responsiveness** of the country programme as a whole to the challenges and needs of the country

- Use of UNDP's **comparative strengths**

- Promoting **UN values** from human development perspective

Specific attention will be paid to UNDP's support to furthering gender equality and women's empowerment in Armenia in agreement with UN SWAP.[115] The evaluation will systematically assess how gender is mainstreamed in UNDP's programme support, and how advocacy efforts helped to further gender equality and women's empowerment.

The evaluation criteria form the basis of the ADR methodological process. In addition to assessments made using the criteria above, the

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114 For UNDP's Strategic Plan, see www.undp.org/execbrd/pdf/dp07-43Rev1.pdf.

115 UN System-wide Action Plan to improve gender equality and the empowerment of women across the UN system, available at www.unwomen.org/~/media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/How%20We%20Work/UNSystemCoordination/UN-SWAP-Framework-Dec-2012.pdf.

ADR process will also identify how various factors (which focus on the *means*) have influenced UNDP's performance. Factors that will be considered in this ADR are:

- National context, political environment, conflict and relations with neighbouring countries

- National ownership of initiatives and results and use of national capacities

- Middle-income country status

- Gender equality and women's empowerment as pre-conditions for sustainable human development

- South-South solutions and cooperation

- Management including programme management, human resource management and financial management

Evaluators will assess the programmes against the criteria, generate findings and come to broad conclusions from the evaluation to draw recommendations for future action.

An outcome paper will be developed for each outcome noted in Table A1.1 above, which examines the programme's progress towards the respective outcome and UNDP's contribution to that change since 2005. A theory-of-change[116] approach will be used and developed by the evaluation team in consultation with UNDP and national stakeholders. Discussions of the theory of change will focus on mapping the assumptions made about a programme's desired change

and causal linkages expected, and these will form a basis for the data collection approach that will verify the theories behind the changes found. The outcome papers will use the theory-of-change approach to assess UNDP's contribution to the outcome using the evaluation criteria, and identify the factors that have influenced this contribution. Each outcome paper will be prepared according to a standard template provided by the IEO, which will facilitate synthesis and the identification of conclusions and recommendations in the ADR report for UNDP to consider together with main partners for future programming.

6. DATA COLLECTION

Assessment of data collection constraints and existing data. An assessment was carried out for each outcome to ascertain the available information and identify data constraints, and to determine the data collection needs and method. The assessment outlined the level of evaluable data that is available. The assessment reveals that: a) there are 11 evaluations covering both cycles, only one outcome evaluation available for UNDP's contribution under the CPD 2005–2008 and an in-depth review of the first UNDAF; b) systematic monitoring of outcomes[117] is available for the evaluation to build on; and c) linkages between projects and outcomes are somewhat noticeable, indicating a programme approach but with some data gaps. The data collection method and tools aims to address the data gaps, as well as the policy-level information that were not covered in outcome evaluations.

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116 'Theory of change' is an outcome-based approach that applies critical thinking to the design, implementation and evaluation of initiatives and programmes intended to support change in their contexts. While there is no single definition and set methodology, at a critical minimum, theory of change is considered to encompass discussion of the following elements:

- context for the initiative, including social, political and environmental conditions
- long-term change that the initiative seeks to support and for whose ultimate benefit
- process/sequence of change anticipated to lead to the desired long-term outcome
- assumptions about how these changes might happen, as a check on whether the activities and outputs are appropriate for influencing change in the desired direction in this context
- diagram and narrative summary that captures the outcome of the discussion.

Source: Isabel Vogel, "Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in International Development" (April 2012), UK Department for International Development

117 UNDP Results-Oriented Annual Reports carry monitoring data at the outcome and output level.

Data collection methods. The evaluation will use data from primary and secondary sources, including desk review of documentation and information and interviews with key informants, including beneficiaries, partners and managers. Based on the theory of change, specific evaluation questions for each criteria and the data collection method will be further detailed and outlined in the outcome papers. A multi-stakeholder approach will be followed and interviews will include government representatives, civil-society organizations, private-sector representatives, UN agencies, multilateral organizations, bilateral donors, and beneficiaries of the programme. Focus groups will be used to consult some groups of beneficiaries from local governance, local development, vocational educational training and institutional development projects. UNCT thematic groups and joint project managers may also be consulted in a focus group format as appropriate.

An initial list of data collection requirements and tentative list of institutions/places that will be visited by the evaluation team is yet to be compiled. The criteria for selecting places for field visits include: size of programme (budget/scope); potential for significant learning (both success/challenging cases); accessibility/security and coverage of all programme areas and outcomes as outlined in the UNDP country programmes except those covered well in outcome evaluations.

The IEO and the Country Office have identified an initial list of background and programme-related documents, which is posted on an ADR SharePoint. The following secondary data will be reviewed: background documents on the national context (including cross-cutting and sectorial plans and policies prepared by the Government); documents prepared by international partners during the period under review and documents prepared by UN system agencies; programme plan and framework; progress reports; monitoring self-assessments such as Results-Oriented Annual Reports; and evaluations conducted by the Country Office and partners.

Validation. The evaluation will use triangulation of information from different sources, collected by different methods to ensure that the data is valid. All the findings must be supported by evidence and validated through consulting multiple sources of information and data collection methods and analysis. The evaluation team will use an evaluation matrix to guide data collection from multiple sources and to validate each finding. The data collection process shall utilize data codification methods (NVivo) to facilitate analysis.

Stakeholder involvement. At the start of the evaluation, a stakeholder analysis is conducted to identify all relevant UNDP partners, as well as those who may not work with UNDP but play a key role in the outcomes to which UNDP contributes. The evaluation will use a participatory approach to the design, implementation and reporting of the ADR.

7. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP. The UNDP IEO will conduct the ADR in consultation with the Country Office, Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS and the Government of Armenia. The IEO evaluation managers will coordinate and lead the evaluation and provide overall management and technical backstopping to the evaluation. The evaluation managers will set the terms of reference for the evaluation, facilitate selection of the evaluation team, prepare the evaluation design, provide guidance to the conduct of evaluation, coordinate team work and analysis, organize feedback sessions and a stakeholder meeting, coordinate team inputs in the preparation of the draft report, lead the drafting of the main evaluation report, and manage the review and follow-up processes. The evaluation managers will support other members of the evaluation team in understanding the scope, the process, the approach and the methodology of ADR; provide oversight, ongoing advice and feedback to the team for quality assurance. The IEO will meet all costs directly related to the conduct of the ADR.

Government of Armenia. The key government counterparts of UNDP in Armenia will facilitate the conduct of ADR by providing necessary access to information sources within the Government of Armenia, safeguarding the independence of the evaluation, and jointly organizing the final stakeholder meeting with the IEO when it is time to present findings and results of the evaluation. Additionally, the counterparts will be responsible within the Government of Armenia for the use and dissemination of the final outputs of the ADR process.

UNDP Country Office in Armenia. The Country Office will support the evaluation team to liaise with key partners and other stakeholders, make available to the team all necessary information regarding UNDP's programmes, projects and activities in the country, and provide factual verifications of the draft report. The Country Office will provide the evaluation team support in kind (e.g. arranging meetings with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries; and assistance for the project site visits).

During the entire evaluation process and particularly during the main mission, the Country Office will cooperate with the ADR team and respect its independence and need to freely access data, information and people that are relevant to this exercise. To ensure the independence of the views expressed in interviews and meetings with stakeholders held for data collection purposes, the Country Office will not participate in them.

The Country Office will ensure timely dispatch of written comments on the draft evaluation report, unless agreed otherwise. From its side, the ADR team will act in a transparent manner and interact regularly with the UNDP Country Office and national government counterparts at critical junctures.

UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States. UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States will support the evaluation through information sharing and will also participate in discussions on emerging conclusions and recommendations.

Evaluation team. The IEO will constitute an evaluation team to undertake the ADR. The team will include the following members:

- *Evaluation manager/team leader (EM/TL),* IEO, has overall responsibility for managing the ADR, and will prepare and design the evaluation, select the evaluation team, and provide methodological guidance to the team. EM/TL will cover the portion of the evaluation related to strategic positioning, UN values and coordination issues; lead general data analysis and synthesis, prepare the draft and final reports, take measures to ensure quality of the report, conduct the stakeholder workshops and take follow up actions to facilitate the use and dissemination of the report. Additionally, the EM/TL will work closely in a supervisory role with all team members, in particular with the consultants covering the portfolios on poverty and MDGs, and democratic governance — including initiatives in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment and Integrated Border Management portfolio.

- *Associate evaluation manager (AEM),* IEO, will support the EM/TL in preparation and design of the evaluation, the selection of the evaluation team, data collection and analysis, review draft report, and other aspects of the ADR process as may be required. She will oversee data collection, analysis more closely for the area of environment and DRR in close cooperation with the lead thematic expert for this area.

- *Evaluation thematic specialists (3),* divided by thematic areas, will have the responsibility to collect and analyse data to assess the programmes' contributions to the outcomes and prepare the outcome papers. The EM/TL will have the responsibility of synthesizing the data from the outcome papers into the final ADR report. Efforts will be made

Table A1.3. Outcomes and Data Collection	
Outcome 1 Outcome 2 Outcome 3 Outcome 6	Poverty and MDG achievement specialist/EM-TL
Outcome 4 Outcome 5 (+ HIV) Outcome 7	Governance specialist/EM-TL
Outcome 8 Outcome 9	Environment/disaster risk reduction specialist/AEM
Strategic positioning	EM/TL

to compose a team with gender balance and with consultants primarily from the country or with extensive proven experience in the country with language fluency in Armenian or Russian. Each specialist will also look into all cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality, knowledge management, capacity development and South-South solutions as appropriate. As detailed in Table A1.3, three specialists will be recruited to cover the areas of 1) poverty and MDG achievement, 2) democratic governance including initiatives in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment and Integrated Border Management portfolio; and 3) energy, environment and disaster risk reduction.

■ *Research Assistant,* IEO, will provide background research and documentation.

8. EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation will be conducted according to the approved IEO process as outlined in the ADR Manual. The following represents a summary of key elements of the process. Four major phases provide a framework conducting the evaluation.

Phase 1: Preparation. The IEO prepares the terms of reference and the evaluation design, following a preparatory mission to UNDP Country Office Armenia located in Yerevan by the evaluation manager. The preparatory mission to

Yerevan, and discussions with UNDP programme staff, include the following objectives: i) ensure that key stakeholders understand the evaluation purpose, process and methodology; ii) obtain key stakeholder perspectives of any key development issues to be covered in the evaluation; iii) determine the scope of the evaluation, approaches, timeframe, and the parameters for the selection of the ADR evaluation team. Additional evaluation team members, comprising international and/or national development professionals, will be recruited.

Phase 2: Data collection and analysis. This phase will commence in April 2014. An evaluation matrix with detailed questions and means of data collection and verification will be developed to guide data collection. The evaluation team will use data collection templates for documenting interviews and other data collected.

■ **Pre-mission activities:** Evaluation team members conduct desk reviews of reference material, and prepare a summary of the context and other evaluative evidence, and identify the outcome theory of change, outcome-specific evaluation questions, gaps and issues that will require validation during the field-based phase of data collection.

■ **Data collection mission:** The evaluation team, including evaluation managers will undertake a mission to the country to engage in data collection activities. The estimated duration of the mission is three weeks in

April. The EM/TL will be take part on the mission and conduct a brief training and initiation workshop to align team members approach to the ADR method, tools and instruments of data collection and analysis. The EM/TL will accompany team members to interviews of key government, donors, development partners, UNCT and Country Office, focusing on strategic positioning and gender equality and women's' empowerment. The AEM will join data collection for one week to accompany relevant interviews with stakeholders linked to the environment and disaster risk reduction portfolio and support the thematic expert in any additional necessary data collection. Other team members collect data according to an agreed plan and in an agreed format (e.g. standard interview notes).

- **Outcome analysis:** The outcome analysis will be conducted by the thematic specialists with a view to producing outcome papers. The analysis of the strategic positioning will be conducted by the EM/TL and the AEM in consultation with the other team members. Following data collection, the team spends one week n data analysis. During this time, data collected from various sources are carefully examined, and the team may follow-up with the Country Office or national counterparts to request additional information/ documentation and clarification. This will be done in May.

- **Data analysis workshop:** Once the preliminary outcome analysis is completed, a one-week data analysis workshop will be organized in mid-May to bring together all members of the evaluation team to share their initial findings and cross-analyse them. At the end of the data analysis workshop, the evaluation team will share initial findings with the Country Office.

Phase 3: Synthesis, report writing and review. Following the data analysis workshop, the evaluation team will finalize outcome reports. The team will ensure that factual inaccuracies and misinterpretations are corrected in completing the outcome reports.

Based on the outcome reports and the discussions at the data analysis workshop, the first draft of the ADR report will be prepared and subjected to the quality control process of the IEO. Once cleared by the IEO, the first draft will be further circulated within the Country Office and the Regional Bureau, and then with relevant stakeholders to arrive at robust, evidence-based evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The second draft, which takes into account the results of the stakeholder reviews, will be prepared for the stakeholder workshops to be organized in Yerevan. At the stakeholder workshops, the results of the evaluation will be presented to key national stakeholders and the ways forward will be discussed with a view to creating a greater buy-in by national stakeholders in taking forward the lessons and recommendations from the report, and to strengthening the national ownership of development process and the necessary accountability of UNDP interventions at country level. Taking into account the discussion at the stakeholder workshops, the final evaluation report will be prepared. UNDP Armenia will prepare the management response to the ADR, under the oversight of RBEC, which will be printed together with the final report and made available to the UNDP Executive Board in June 2015.

Phase 4: Production, dissemination and follow-up. The ADR report and brief will be widely distributed in both hard and electronic versions. The evaluation report will be made available to the UNDP Executive Board by the time of approving a new Country Programme Document. It will be widely distributed by the IEO and at UNDP headquarters, to evaluation outfits of other international organizations, and to evaluation societies and research institutions in the region. The Armenia Country Office and Government of Armenia will disseminate to stakeholders in the country. The report and the

management response will be published on the UNDP website[118] as well as in the Evaluation Resource Centre. RBEC will be responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of follow-up actions in the Evaluation Resource Centre.[119]

Table A1.4. Time-frame for the ADR Process[120]		
Activity	**Responsible**	**Proposed time-frame**
Phase 1: Preparation		
Preparatory mission	EM	January
Terms of Reference – approval by the Independent Evaluation Office	EM	February
Selection of other evaluation team members	EM and AEM	February
Phase 2: Data collection and analysis		
Preliminary analysis of available data and context analysis	Evaluation team	March
Data collection analysis, outcome reports drafting	Evaluation team	April
Synthesis	Evaluation team	May
Phase 3: Synthesis and report writing		
First ADR draft – clearance by the Independent Evaluation Office	EM and AEM	June
First draft ADR for Country Office review	EM	July
Draft –Government/reference group/stakeholder review	EM	August
Stakeholder workshop/submission of the final report	EO, CO, Government	September
Phase 4: Production and follow-up		
Editing and formatting	IEO	October
Issuance of the final report and Evaluation Brief	IEO	October
Management response	CO	October
Dissemination of the final report	IEO, CO, Government	November

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118   www.undp.org/eo/.

119   http://erc.undp.org/.

120   The above time-frame is indicative of the process and deadlines, and does not imply full-time engagement of the evaluation team during the period.

RESULTS MATRIX FOR CPD PERIODS 2005–2009 AND 2010–2015

Table A1.5. Results Matrix for CPD Periods 2005–2009 and 2010–2015					
Strategic Plan	**2005–2009**		**2010–2015**		
	UNDAF	**UNDP CPD**	**National Priority****	**UNDAF**	**UNDP CPD**
Practice Areas	**Outcomes**	**Outcomes**	**Priority**	**Outcome**	**Outcome**
Poverty reduction and achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs	1. Reducing the levels of poverty and income inequality in accordance with the MDGs and PRSP. 2. Increasing the quality and accessibility of basic social services in accordance with the MDGs and PRSP.	The National Social Monitoring System is expanded and strengthened. Innovative income generation schemes and mechanisms are introduced.	1. Access to enhanced economic opportunities, in line with sustainable development principles	1. Inclusive and sustainable growth is promoted by reducing disparities and expanding economic and social opportunities for vulnerable groups.	1.1 National policies, strategies and programmes reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups. (1) 1.2 Vulnerable groups, in particular women and youth, have greater access to economic opportunities in the regions of Armenia. (2) 1.3 National systems of data collection, reporting and monitoring of human development strengthened. (3)
			3. Access to social services in line with sustainable development principles	3. Access and quality of social services is improved especially for vulnerable groups	3.1 Institutional capacities strengthened and mechanisms in place to respond to the needs of the vulnerable groups. (4)
Disaster, crisis prevention and recovery		Disaster management and recovery in at-risk communities is strengthened.	[see Priority 4]	[see Outcome 4]	4.2 National capacities for DRM strengthened. (8)
Responding to HIV/AIDS		Multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS are strengthened.			

Table A1.5. Results Matrix for CPD Periods 2005–2009 and 2010–2015 (continued)					
Strategic Plan	**2005–2009**		**2010–2015**		
	UNDAF	**UNDP CPD**	**National Priority****	**UNDAF**	**UNDP CPD**
Practice Areas	**Outcomes**	**Outcomes**	**Priority**	**Outcome**	**Outcome**
Democratic governance	3. Improving the transparency and accountability of Government institutions in accordance with the MDGs and PRSP.	Governing institutions with policy, oversight and electoral functions are strengthened.	2. Increase the capacity of citizens to participate, exercise their rights and, exercise their rights and responsibilities and government institutions to comply with their obligations	2. Democratic governance is strengthened by improving accountability, promoting institutional and capacity development and expanding people's participation	2.1 Improved structures and mechanisms at both centralized and decentralized levels ensure the progressive realization of human rights (5)
		Participatory policymaking among targeted groups is promoted.			2.2 Capacity at different levels of governance to enhance transparency, accountability and inclusiveness is improved (6)
		Respect for, and the awareness of human rights, including women's rights, is increased.			2.3 Communities and people have the capacities to claim their rights and participate in decision-making processes (7)
Environment and sustainable development	4. Promoting environmentally sound technologies and effective management of natural resources in accordance with the MDGs and PRSP.	The conservation and sustainable use of natural resources is strengthened.	4. Promote effective management of natural resources in line with sustainable development principles	4. National authorities integrate environment and disaster risk reduction into national and local development frameworks	4.1 Armenia is better able to address key environmental challenges including climate change and natural resource management (9)
		Access to sustainable energy services is increased.			

**Listed in 2010–2015 UNDAF and CPD
( ) outcome numbers as in the Integrated Work plan in ATLAS
Source: UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, based on UN Strategic Documents

Annex 3
PEOPLE CONSULTED

Abrahamyan, Robert, Head of the Middle Professional and Vocational Administration, Ministry of Education and Sciences

Aleksandryan, Anahit, Head of Hazardous Substances and Waste Management Division, Ministry of Nature Protection

Andreasyan, Rafik, Head of Community, Urtsadzor

Apujanyan, Lilit, Project Coordinator, SME Development National Centre

Arakelyan, Ruben, Director, Humanitarian Demining and Expertise Centre, Ministry of Defence

Asatryan, Armine, Project Assistant/Expert, National Ozone Unit

Asaturyan, Varduhi, Head of UN Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Aslanyan, Anush, Deputy Executive Director, SME Development National Centre

Aslanyan, Ara, Senior Specialist, Foreign Relations Department, Ministry of Emergency Situations

Azaryan, Harutyun, Mayor, Pambak, Gegharkunik region

Barseghyan, Varujan, Mayor, Vedi, Ararat Marz region

Begyan, Garegin, Mayor, Geghamasar, Gegharkunik region

Davtyan, Vanush, Board Member, National Statistical Service

Galstyan, Marina, Director, Youth Studies Centre

Gasparyan, Tatevik, Director, National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development

Gevorgyan, Gagik, Head of Teaching Methodologies Department, Police Academy of the Republic of Armenia

Gevorgyan, Gegham, Lawyer, National Centre for Legislative Regulation

Gevorgyan, Tigran, First Deputy Chief of Staff, Prime Minister's Office

Ghahramanyan, Liana, Project Manager, National Ozone Unit

Ghukasyan, Norayr, Director, National Institute of Education

Giloyan, Ashot, Head of Local Self-Government Department, Ministry of Territorial Administration

Grigoryan, Ashot, Head of Bagratashen Border Crossing Point detachment, NSS Border Troops

Grigoryan, Hrach, Principal, Yerevan Regional N 1 State College

Grigoryan, Nikolay, Deputy Head of Rescue Service, Ministry of Emergency Situations

Grigoryan, Samvel, Director, National Centre for AIDS Prevention

Harutyunyan, Armen, Development and Investment Programs Department, Yerevan city Municipality

Hayrapetyan, David, Director, Youth Events Holding Centre

Hovhannisyan, Misha, Mayor, Yeghegnut, Lori province

Hovhannisyan, Parandzem, Public Relations and Communications Specialist, Youth Studies Centre

Hovhannisyan, Suren, Director,
Arevik National Park, Ministry of
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Kajoyan, Vahram, Head of Division of
International Organizations, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs

Karapetyan, Aleksan, Deputy Minister, Chair of
Inter-Agency Working Group, Ministry of
Urban Development

Karapetyan, Hermine, Administrative Assistant,
Youth Studies Centre

Khachatryan, Kamavor, Head of Military
Medical Department, Ministry of Defence

Khachatryan, Yeghisabet, Staff Assistant,
Gnishik community Administration

Khalatyan, Artashes, Specialist, International
Relations Division, Central Bank of
Republic of Armenia

Khangeldyan, Hovhannes, Head of Crisis
Management Centre, Ministry of
Emergency Situations

Kirakosyan, Yeghishe, Deputy Minister,
Ministry of Justice

Kocharyan, Suren, Mayor, Lusadzor,
Tavush region

Makyan, Arkadi, Head Community,
Bagratashen community, Lori region

Margaryan, Arman, Head of Border Crossing
Points Coordination Division, State Food
Security Service

Margaryan, Liana, former Ozone Focal Point,
National Ozone Unit

Martirosyan, Mher, Deputy Head of Customs
Clearance Department, State Revenue
Committee

Martirosyan, Victor, Director of Environmental
Projects Implementation Unit, Ministry of
Nature Protection

Matevosyan, Hamlet, Rector, Crisis
Management Academy

Melkonyan, Mestrop, Head of Community,
Gnishik, Vayots Dzor Marz region

Minasyan, Artur, Head of the Operative
Information Division, Department of Fight
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Academy of the Republic of Armenia

Mkrtchyan, Ara, Mayor, Kasakh, Kotayk region

Mkrtchyan, Arsen, Head of Railway
Department, Ministry of Transport
and Communication

Mnatsakanian, Zohrab, Ambassador of the
Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the
United Nations

Muradyan, Garegin, Director, Lernajavakhamerdz
Fund for Community Development

Musheghyan, Lilit, Head of the Development
Programmes and Analysis Unit, Armavir
Regional Administration

Narimanyan, Volodya, Deputy Head of Agency
for Water Management, Ministry of
Nature Protection

Nazaryan, Arcrun, Director of Fund for
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Tavush region

Ohanyan, Rafik, former Head of Community,
Ptghavan, Lori region

Papyan, Armen, Head of the Department for
Youth Policies, Ministry of Sport and
Youth Affairs

Papyan, Simon, First Deputy Minister, Ministry
of Nature Protection

Paranyan, Arayik, Head of Community,
Ptghavan, Lori region

Petrosyan, Genya, Deputy Ombudsman,
Human Rights Defender of the Republic
of Armenia

Petrosyan, Ruben, Deputy Director, Chief
Forester Hayantar (ArmForest) Ministry of
Agriculture

Petrosyan, Smbat, Head of Information
Management and Early Warning Centre,
Ministry of Emergency Situations

Petrosyan, Stepan, Adviser to the Minister,
Ministry of Diaspora

Poghosyan, Hovhannes, Head of International Relation Department, Police Academy of the Republic of Armenia

Poghosyan, Yuri, Member Council, State Statistical Service

Sakanyan, Nune, Head of Projects Coordination Unit, Yerevan City Municipality

Santrosyan, Armen, Mayor, Dilijan, Tavush region

Sargsyan, Gegham, Head of Education Department, Civil Service Council

Sargsyan, Grigor, former Director, Prosecutors Training School

Sargsyan, Levon, Deputy Governor, Tavush region

Sargsyan, Sahak Second Secretary of the Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations

Sargsyan, Shushanik, Head of Staff, Charentsavan Municipality

Sargsyan, Suren, Head of Community, Tavshut community, Shirak region

Sarkisyan, Vladimir, Mayor, Daranak, Gegharkunik region

Srapyan, Samvel, Head of the Housing Stock Management and Municipal Infrastructure Division, Ministry of Urban Development

Sujyan, Karine, Head of Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sukyasyan, Seryozha, Head of Community, Areni, Vayots Dzor Marz region

Tananyan, Aram, Head of the Department of Implementation of National Security Strategy of the Staff, National Security Council of the Republic of Armenia

Tatoyan, Arman, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Justice

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Annex 5

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

CONTEXT, BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS

1. The Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in Armenia, undertaken in full consultation with the Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS and with UNDP Country Office in Armenia, provides for timely input to the evaluation of UNDP's work and preparation of the future Programme in Armenia. The report reflects UNDP's contribution to development outcomes in Armenia, the efficacy and relevance of the UNDP Country Office (CO) support to the Government and in turn will help the design of the new Country Programme Document for the period 2016–2020. The report provides a useful summary of UNDP's work in Armenia for the period 2005–2013, including results achieved, and critical guidance on UNDP's comparative advantages as the organization aligns its country-level priorities with UNDP's new Strategic Plan 2014–2017. It is the first such exercise that has been completed in Armenia.

2. UNDP has engaged with Armenia's people and Government to build development solutions to the challenges of the day and for the future. As the ADR highlights, UNDP's role as a neutral, reliable, responsive and strategically positioned development partner has been recognized by the Government, civil society and other partners. UNDP has played a key role in addressing complex issues, including sustainable development, with an emphasis on energy efficiency and disaster risk reduction; anti-corruption; equal opportunities for men and women; improved municipal governance and local development; developing the capacities of public

institutions; integrated border management; and unemployment and regional disparities, including support to SMEs, and modernization of the Vocational Education and Training sector.

3. UNDP in Armenia has provided critical support towards strengthening the country's resilience through the guidance provided in the establishment of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategies and systems and in the mainstreaming of DRR into local development plans. In these areas Armenia has become a model for the region.

4. UNDP is positioned as a lead agency and strategic partner of the Government of Armenia in promoting and integrating the concept of sustainable development into the decision-making process. UNDP has provided specific expert advice to government institutions on climate change, and energy efficiency. It has supported the application of energy efficient solutions and implemented the first ever large-scale 'enveloping' of a multi-apartment building to demonstrate a reduction in energy costs. It has been playing a key role in the development of the Protected Areas network.

5. The ADR has highlighted the work on innovation, promoting the concept of 'citizen expert' by creating frequent opportunities for citizens to co-create development solutions and to scale up their ideas within Government and civil society. UNDP Armenia has been at the forefront of UNDP's innovation agenda. The Country Office has experimented with methodologies for crowdsourcing, prototyping and scaling up, through Social Innovation Camps and more

recently established 'Kolba', a social innovation lab/incubator.

6. While the report has managed to capture results of UNDP's work in Armenia over the past eight years, the conclusions and recommendations that result from the ADR, however, are largely statements about processes internal to UNDP, namely, focusing on 'how' rather than 'what' UNDP does or should do in Armenia. The Country Office would have found helpful more substantive and strategic conclusions on how to refocus the programme in specific areas and more broadly on UNDP's strategic positioning in Armenia in line with UNDP's Strategic Plan. Overall, the County Office believes that the ADR could have been leveraged to provide UNDP management with more insights as to what should be the focus of our future partnership in Armenia.

7. In a 'middle-income' country, UNDP's added value comes less from acting as donor, but rather as a facilitator, generator of ideas, and convener of partnerships. As such, it should be noted that many of the results mentioned in the ADR report were achieved in partnership with the Government of Armenia and a number of organizations, including the European Union, Global Environment Facility, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) — which have been the main contributors and should be acknowledged as such in the report.

8. The management of UNDP office in Armenia have studied the ADR report and reflected carefully on its findings and recommendations. UNDP will, where relevant, incorporate its recommendations into the new Country Programme for 2016–2020.

Key recommendations and management response

Evaluation recommendation 1. UNDP should hold further discussions with Government stakeholders, to redefine a more consultative relationship with regard to strategic prioritization of resources, identification and selection of programme themes and beneficiaries. Equally important would be to define with the Government ways to ensure UNDP's neutrality, efficiency and effectiveness is not compromised and that proper mechanisms are put in place to allow UNDP to have the flexibility needed to foster innovation, to ensure value for money and to make timely and efficient contributions to sustainable development.

Management response: Since 2005, UNDP benefitted from a system of National Directors at Deputy Ministerial level for each portfolio, who provide overall guidance and coordination of UNDP projects and programmes, aimed at promoting stronger national ownership. This approach is currently under revision by the Country Office as in some portfolios one Ministry does not have the mandate for the range of activities, such as democratic governance that covers many areas and issues. As UNDP's programming becomes more cross-cutting, and as the programme aligns to the new UNDP Strategic Plan, so the traditional portfolio boundaries are also becoming blurred. Discussion will be held going forward to balance consultation with the necessary flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness of UNDP.

The ongoing UNDAF and CPD preparation process, which includes the strategic prioritization of resources and programme themes, is being coordinated with the Government. Government Ministries are also encouraged to take more responsibility for donor coordination, and to attend the respective donor coordination meetings which are currently organized by the UN.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)
1.1 Ongoing UNDAF and CPD discussions with the Government	10.2014 – 06.2015	RC Unit, Senior Management, Programme Unit
1.2 Revision of National Director approach	10.2014 – 06.2015	Senior Management of the Country Office

Evaluation recommendation 2. UNDP Armenia should develop the next programme with a focus on fewer and more specific, realistic and strategically targeted outcomes, narrowing the range of activities accordingly.

Management response: As per new Country Programme Document (CPD) guidelines, the number of outcomes is reduced to four, so this point will be addressed in the preparation of the next CPD, which will be aligned with the new UNDP Strategic Plan. The areas of cooperation will be based on country needs and UNDP comparative advantage.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)
2.1 Participate in HQ Alignment exercise to ensure full alignment with the new strategic plan	10.2014 – 06.2015	Senior Management, RBM, focal point
2.2 Preparation of new Country Programme Document	10.2014 – 06.2015	Senior Management, Programme Team, RBM focal point

Key recommendations and management response (continued)

Evaluation recommendation 3. UNDP should further capitalize on the opportunities brought by Integrated Border Management (IBM) initiatives and develop a well-articulated strategy to leverage synergies with other interrelated development issues and diversify funding sources with a conscious technical and value-for-money strategy.

Management response: The Country Office is beginning to explore ways to link the IBM work with other portfolios, for example in mainstreaming energy efficiency construction practices and bringing experts to look at the feasibility of providing energy supply to communities near the border crossing.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)
3.1 Develop a strategy for leveraging synergies of the IBM work with other development issues, including a partnership strategy	10.2014 – 08.2015	IBM Portfolio in cooperation with the Programme team

Evaluation recommendation 4. UNDP should make further efforts to effectively document and disseminate its successful experiences and lessons learned in programme approaches and initiatives, particularly successful pilot ones.

Management response: The Country Office is attempting to do this through the diversification of UNDP communications, public outreach and strengthened knowledge management. Some projects are trying, for the first time, to prototype ideas early in the development programme and project cycle in order to test, and prove, what works and what can then be scaled up. Kolba, UNDP Armenia's innovations lab is responsible for experimentation in new approaches to development assistance and for working with other projects and programmes to integrate these new approaches. Lessons learned from experiments/pilots and UNDP Armenia's broader programmes are disseminated in multimedia communications. The Communications Associate will be working more closely with the RBM focal point, Kolba and Programme teams to link corporate learning, capacity development, RBM, innovation and knowledge management.

The use of conventional media tools, such as press releases, news articles and success stories, audio-video materials, has been augmented by non-conventional media tools, such as websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)
4.1 UNDP Armenia website updated to document experiences and lessons learned.	06.2013 – ongoing	UNDP Communications Associate in cooperation with the Programme team
4.2 UNDP Armenia social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) accounts created and updated	01.2013 – ongoing	UNDP Communications Associate in cooperation with the Kolba team
4.3 UNDP Communications Strategy revised	04.2014	UNDP Communications Associate in cooperation with the Kolba team
4.4 Monitoring missions to project sites to capture the successes and lessons-learned	06.2013 – ongoing	UNDP Communications Associate in cooperation with the Programme and the Kolba teams

Key recommendations and management response (continued)

Evaluation recommendation 5. UNDP Armenia should strive to adopt a more holistic, sustained, long-term and multipronged approach to more fully and explicitly integrate gender equality components into all areas of work with a focus not only on gender-responsive but on gender-transformative contributions that can fast-track development and address power relations and cultural structures.

Management response: The Country Office Gender Mainstreaming Strategy is currently being updated by the Country Office to align to new approaches in the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and new Strategic Plan.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)
5.1 UNDP Armenia to update the Country Office Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for integrating gender equality into all areas of work	10.2014 – 06.2015	Gender focal point, in collaboration with Senior Management and Programme team
5.2 UNDP Armenia to update project review procedure to ensure gender is fully mainstreamed into all projects	10.2014 – 06.2015	DRR/ Gender focal point, in collaboration with Senior Management and Programme Team
5.3 Provide training for UNDP key personal on gender mainstreaming.	10.2014 – ongoing	Gender focal point

Evaluation recommendation 6. As Armenia is a country prone to disasters, UNDP should explore how to further integrate and mainstream DRR into all its programmes and initiatives.

Management response: UNDP Armenia will update the project review procedure to ensure DRR is mainstreamed into projects, with clear criteria and indicators.

All areas of work proposed in UNDP's new Strategic Plan are aimed at building resilience whether, for instance, through greater employment and livelihoods, more equitable access to resources, better protection against economic and environmental shocks – so this recommendation will be implemented as the Country Office aligns its programmes and planning to the new Strategic Plan.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)
6.1 UNDP Armenia to update project review procedure to ensure DRR is fully mainstreamed into projects	10.2014 – 06.2015	RBM Focal Point, EG portfolio
6.2 Development of DRR mainstreaming criteria and indicators toolkit. Testing the toolkit within the UNDP projects	10.2014 – 10.2015	EG portfolio, Regional Technical Advisor
6.3 Provide training for UNDP key personal on DRR mainstreaming.	10.2014 – ongoing	EG Portfolio
6.4 Development of monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track effectiveness of the toolkit	10.2014 – 11.2015	EG portfolio, Regional Technical Advisor

Evaluation recommendation 7. UNDP should further improve results-based management and monitoring and evaluation of the programme at the outcome level and work with coherent and comprehensive theories of change to map assumptions and ensure complex contexts and the multifaceted nature of development are considered to contribute to development, behavioural and transformational change.

Management response: It is noted that outcome evaluations are costly and resources need to be available to fully implement this recommendation. Monitoring and reporting will increase efforts to produce and use evidence-based data focused on outcomes to cover learning and accountability; and the feasibility of strengthening RBM and increasing the number of evaluations will be further discussed during CPD design.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)
7.1 Participate in HQ Alignment exercise to ensure full alignment with the new strategic plan	10.2014 – 06.2015	

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