


Management response template

UNDP management response template

Mid-Term Evaluation of “Women in Local Development: Women in Politics” (WiP) Project

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Evaluation recommendation 1. Leadership development activities with young people are an important and effective long-term investment but they are resource intensive. More impact could be achieved in the shorter-term by **increasing the focus on more strategic activities with key actors at national level, in particular political parties**. The current political climate makes it difficult at present to engage with political parties on the scale originally envisaged. UNDP could explore the possibility of starting this work on a more low-key basis, or in partnership with an Armenian NGO. Discussions with two members of the National Assembly from different political parties indicate that there are people in political parties with whom WiP can engage in dialogue on this issue, even in the current climate.

Management response: The recommendation is accepted. Cooperation with political parties is envisaged through inter-party taskforce creation, which should provide recommendations for gender mainstreaming into strategic documents of the political parties. It is also planned to cooperate with political parties within the pre-electoral support to increase the chances of women members of political parties to enter public office in the context of the revised Electoral Code and subsequent shift to proportionate electoral system. Given the continuingly volatile internal political situation, careful approach should be applied to avoid possible manipulations in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections planned for June 2021 and to ensure complete transparency of UNDP efforts in the above area.

| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking* | |
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| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 1.1 An inter-party taskforce will be formed, and its capacity will be developed towards democratization and gender-mainstreaming of internal politics and programmes of the political parties. The taskforce will be capacitated to revise and provide recommendations for gender mainstreamed policy making into strategic documents of the political parties. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |

| 1.2 Pre-electoral support to women who are interested to enter local self-government will be provided on ongoing basis irrespective of the timeline of elections. The focus of interventions will be on providing beneficiaries with respective knowledge and skills, as well as orientation on activity of political partners in a generic way, with no specific focus on any political force, thus advancing their leadership potential and skills. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|----------|--|
| <p>Evaluation recommendation 2. Feedback from a range of stakeholders indicates that it would be beneficial to deepen and scale up leadership development activities with women in target communities, and to provide support on a more regular basis, not only around elections. This would help to further develop their leadership capacities, raise their profiles, develop their leadership credentials, and enhance their electability in a sustainable way. Interviewed councillors who took part have reported concrete results and are keen to continue to develop more ambitious initiatives. More intensive engagement in this area is currently much needed, to mobilise women’s leadership potential to address issues resulting from the double crisis that Armenia is currently dealing with. UNDP could consider working with or through one or more Armenian organisations to help scale up this work. Further research is necessary to identify specific focus areas but potential examples could involve work relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Services and support for spontaneous arrivals; b) Psychological support for veterans, family members, spontaneous arrivals, and people isolated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; c) Supporting national COVID-19 vaccination efforts at community level, as vaccines become available. | | | | |
| <p>Management response: The recommendation is partially accepted. The project team will continue the leadership development activities introducing also new models for leadership advancement of women at various levels of governance. Involvement of a local NGO needs further consideration on case by case basis. It will not be possible within the framework of the current “Women in Politics” due to its specific project design.</p> | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 2.1 Capacity building activities aimed at enhancing women’s leadership, including: meetings and trainings for Online Community of Practice (of WEGE programme beneficiary women), advanced trainings for women serving/working in local self-government, special leadership schools for professional groups of women and regional forums on women’s political participation (to re-commence from spring 2021). | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |

| 2.2 The project has already launched the small-scale grant schemes for women aimed at: - promoting leadership in the sphere of enhancing social cohesion and response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as - ensuring sustainable communication with local self-governments through establishing policy dialogue platforms. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|----------|--|
| 2.3 The project will launch a mentorship scheme for leadership development through job shadowing, exchange of experience and motivational talks with mid- to high-level women leaders from the Government, National Assembly and other institutions. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| 2.4 The pre-electoral support scheme (redesigned under the new legislation, irrespective of the timing of elections) will further build the capacity of women potentially interested to enter local office and will motivate them to advance across the party lists. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| Evaluation recommendation 3. It is suggested to identify communities with potential for the development of female leaders on a periodic basis throughout the year , not only immediately prior to local elections. WiP could then focus on developing the capacities of female leaders in these communities, not only to participate in elections, but also to develop and lead initiatives that will help to raise their profiles and enhance their “electability”. | | | | |
| Management response: The recommendation is accepted and initial steps for this component are already undertaken: the methodology for pre-electoral support is being designed, mentorship scheme for further leadership enhancement is being developed and will become operational from May 2021. | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 3.1 The project will continue organizing leadership advancement schemes for women in communities, targeting civic activists, women from professional groups (of intellectual domains) and other. The project will also continue providing pre-electoral support in | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |

| communities of project coverage irrespective of the timeline of elections. | | | | |
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| 3.2 The project will continue the application of “Integrity Islands” methodology in two more communities in Shirak and Lori regions of Armenia to involve more community women into decision-making processes. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| <p>Evaluation recommendation 4. WiP takes a systemic approach to a complex issue. As a result, the project encompasses 28 distinct activities some of which are small in scale. This suggests that project implementation may be resource-intensive from a management perspective. It may be worth considering how, and to what extent, the project could be simplified to enable more in-depth work on fewer activities, without sacrificing the systemic approach. This applies to UNDP and OxYGen activities.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Management response: The recommendation is accepted. The project will suspend the leadership development scheme for high school students in 2021 despite the acknowledged and proven impact of the component. The main strategic focus will be on the advancement of women’s leadership through various modalities, the policy dialogue related activities and the engagement with political parties till the end of the project in September 2021 (as mentioned under Recommendation 1).</p> | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| <p>4.1 The project will continue advancement of leadership for women at the local level through organization of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-electoral support for women in communities; - Leadership schools for women from local self-government bodies (LSG); - Leadership schools for professional groups of women; - Mentorship scheme for women from LSG both vertically (with the central level government) and horizontally (e.g. exchange of experience among the beneficiaries in various communities/regions of Armenia). | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |

| <p>4.2 The project's policy dialogue activities will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - grants scheme to enhance the policy dialogue from local to central levels; - provision of packages of recommendations for draft legal and policy documents by the "I AM the Community" Youth Club; - regional forums on women's political participation. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|----------|--|
| <p>Evaluation recommendation 5. A major achievement of WiP is the adoption of recommendation to introduce gender quotas in local elections. It would be desirable to institutionalise the process of participatory policy making to support the quality of future recommendations and to ensure that feedback is systematically provided to those who submit recommendations to different institutions.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Management response: The recommendation is accepted. The recommendation will be discussed with project's main actors for policy recommendations and OxYGen Foundation to ensure institutionalized process of policy making.</p> | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| <p>5.1 The project will further build the capacity of the "I AM the Community" youth club members for more independent, self-reliant and sustainable work more as a united force and collective intelligence, and to have a monitoring and follow up mechanism in regard to their policy contribution with the Government entities and the National Assembly.</p> | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| <p>Evaluation recommendation 6. UNDP's leadership development work, which has been implemented for a number of years, is highly valued by participants and it is considered an asset to be able to include participation in this in a CV. UNDP could consider developing these activities into a more structured leadership development programme that women and young people can engage in at different stages in their careers.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Management response: The recommendation is accepted. New avenues for the implementation of the recommendation will be looked into.</p> | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |

| 6.1 This recommendation is applicable for WYILD project too, hence will be discussed with broader WEGE team to come up with a comprehensive programme outline/concept. | 31 August 2021 | Project and WEGE team | | Initiated |
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| <p>Evaluation recommendation 7. Feedback from women from various professional groups who participated in pilot Leadership Schools for Professional Women was positive but they would have liked the experience to take them further in their leadership journey. This group would benefit from substantive follow-up activities spread over time. It is understood that UNDP has already started to address this through an online community.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Management response: The recommendation is accepted. The community of graduates will be engaged in the project's leadership advancement and mentorship schemes to boost their potential interest and participation in politics.</p> | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 7.1 The project will continue engaging the women graduates of the leadership schools within the upcoming relevant project activities: Community of Practice online meetings, capacity building events, mentorship scheme, small scale grant scheme, policy dialogue platforms and regional forums on women's political participation (to re-commence from spring 2021). | 30 September 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| <p>Evaluation recommendation 8. The leadership schools for women from various professional groups would benefit from the participation of decision-makers so that participants can engage directly with them. The lack of direct contact with decision-makers was considered to be a gap in an otherwise positive experience.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Management response: The recommendation is accepted. A full-scale mentorship scheme will link beneficiaries with the leaders from various levels for learning, experience sharing, future networking and inspiration.</p> | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
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| 8.1 The project team has the experience of involving women leaders into its activities and trainings as | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |

| guest/inspiro speakers. This practice will be advanced to leadership schools of the professional groups. The WiP project also plans to undertake (the COVID-19 situation permitting) a series of offline events between community women and high-level decision-makers. | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|----------|--|
| 8.2 The project will start the mentorship scheme in May 2020, which will allow the women beneficiaries of the WiP project to interact and learn from women leaders at various levels of governance (as mentioned under Action 2.3) | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| Evaluation recommendation 9. When working with candidates and councillors in unconsolidated communities, it would be helpful to start to prepare them for the new challenges they can expect when their communities are eventually consolidated. In this regard, it has been suggested that there may be scope for additional synergies with the WYILD project. | | | | |
| Management response: The recommendation is accepted. Additional avenues for more enhanced cooperation will be sought with the WYILD project team. | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 9.1 The methodology for pre-electoral support scheme is being re-designed by the joint efforts of the WiP and WYILD projects to better address the challenges of the transit to proportional election system. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| Evaluation recommendation 10. Follow-up research is needed to assess the reach and effectiveness of WiP research and discourse activities. It is understood that this will be done towards the end of the project, but interim research would have been useful to assess whether fine tuning or a change in focus was required. The social media and website statistics are useful but on their own, they provide no insight into changes in perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, etc. Summaries of effectiveness and impact analysis should be made available in English for communication to a wider audience. The following list provides examples of where additional activity follow-up might have provided useful insight into intermediate changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Survey of all regional forum participants to understand what changed as a result of learning about the results of the research; b) Follow-up research with a sample of men and women of different ages who have engaged with different research products; c) Systematic survey of all Tier 3 pre-election support participants; d) Systematic survey of Tier 1 and Tier 2 pre-election support participants; e) Survey in a sample of target communities to gain deeper insights into the effects, in the general community, of media articles about female leaders and candidates. This should cover men and women of different ages; | | | | |

| f) Addition of buttons and/or mini-surveys to social media posts and web articles to collect information. | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|----------|--|
| Management response: The recommendation is accepted. Despite the short period remaining until the end of the project, potential research activities will be discussed with OxYGen Foundation and a wider partners' network. | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 10.1 In view of the time constraint until the end of the project, UNDP team will discuss the feasibility of a targeted small-scale research with OxYGen Foundation. | 31 August 2021 | Project team in close cooperation with partners, including the Donor, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, and the OxYGen Foundation | | Initiated |
| <p>Evaluation recommendation 14¹. It would be desirable for project reports to provide a clearer and more concise picture of WiP's activities and effectiveness. The following suggestions would support enhanced external communication of activities and results with the funder, potential future funders, partner ministries and agencies, etc.</p> <p>a) Develop a spreadsheet of all initiatives that have resulted from leadership schools, youth club camps, DEMO Co-Design Labs, etc. This should indicate, among other things, which group or individual designed and implemented the project, when it was designed, start and end dates of implementation, where it was implemented, project budget, type of initiative, target group(s), objectives of the initiative, results of the initiative. This may not be feasible for Leadership Schools for High School Students due to the large numbers involved but would be worth considering for other groups;</p> <p>b) Develop a spreadsheet of all policy/ legislative/ regulatory recommendations resulting from leadership schools, youth club activities, etc. This should indicate which group made the recommendations, when, to which authority, if a response was received, and if the recommendations was adopted in full or in part, and if not, why it was not adopted. Various groups and individuals have submitted policy recommendations to different institutions. However, these important outputs are not well-documented and project reports focus primarily on the work of the "I AM the Community" Youth Leadership Club. Other interviewees and survey respondents indicated that they too had submitted recommendations to different bodies.</p> | | | | |
| Management response: The recommendation is accepted and respective documents will be developed as advised. | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |

¹ Recommendations 11-13 are not addressed to UNDP.

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| 14.1 Potential new tools are being designed in consultation with WEGE broader team and will become from mid-April 2020. | 31 August 2021 | Project and WEGE Team | | Initiated |
| <p>Evaluation recommendation 15. The clarity of project reports would be improved by (1) making more use of tables in project reports to summarise activities and results, and (2) by making a clear distinction between activities and results in report narrative. For example, quantitative analysis on pre-election support provided to the evaluator significantly facilitates understanding of pre-election support but this does not appear to be included in project reports. The coherence of standard progress reports could be enhanced in some parts.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Management response: The recommendation is accepted and the project reports will be restructured as advised.</p> | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 15.1 Inclusion of additional qualitative and quantitative data and other recommended parameters into the project reports is under discussion in the team and with the Donor. The next quarterly report (due July 1, 2021) will include the agreed parameters. <i>Note: the data relating to elections can be added only when elections are planned and held (hopefully during the lifetime of the project).</i> | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| <p>Evaluation recommendation 16. The project team has developed a well-structured and potentially very useful dataset. However, it is undermined by anomalies and small errors that take time to remove. Some data inconsistencies can be hard to identify and rationalise when the data is in an unfamiliar language and script. It is recommended to ensure that the data is “clean” and consistent. To facilitate this, it may be helpful to retain the services of a data expert from time to time. Furthermore, a data expert could help to identify other types of quantitative data that could be usefully collected to substantiate project results and support the project team with analysis.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Management response: The recommendation is accepted. The project team will undertake the respective actions to clear the project dataset.</p> | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |

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| 16.1 In consultation with and approval of the Donor, a data specialist will be engaged to improve the dataset. | 31 August 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |
| Evaluation recommendation 17. It is recommended to integrate information on OxYGen’s activities into the project dataset. | | | | |
| Management response: The recommendation is accepted. The database that the Evaluator is referring to is that of the WEGE programme, not exclusively the WiP project. However, the project team will consider the possibility of creating a separate database for the WiP project only, which will include the OxYGen data too. | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 17.1 The project team will review technical modalities, feasibility, effectiveness and efficiency, following which will develop a separate/parallel “Women in Politics” project database to include the data of the OxYGen Foundation as well. | 31 August 2021 | Project team and OxYGen Foundation | | Initiated |
| Evaluation recommendation 18. It is recommended to update the results framework from time to time to reflect changes in the project. OxYGen appears to be using a modified results framework in its 2020 report. This is not to suggest that it must use the original results framework if it is no longer relevant or is found to be impractical or unachievable. However, changes should be systematically documented and justified. | | | | |
| Management response: The recommendation is accepted. The Results Framework is currently under revision jointly with the project Donor to reflect the current realities of the crisis context and policy reforms. | | | | |
| Key action(s) | Completion date | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking | |
| | | | Comments | Status (initiated, completed or no due date) |
| 18.1 The revised draft version of the Results Framework is submitted to the Donor and is pending for approval. | 30 April 2021 | Project team | | Initiated |