

Closure Stage Quality Assurance Report

Form Status: Approved

Overall Rating:	Highly Satisfactory
Decision:	
Portfolio/Project Number:	00082081
Portfolio/Project Title:	Women Economic Empowerment
Portfolio/Project Date:	2018-01-01 / 2021-12-31

Strategic

Quality Rating: Exemplary

1. Did the project pro-actively identified changes to the external environment and incorporated them into the project strategy?

- 3: *The project team identified relevant changes in the external environment that may present new opportunities or threats to the project's ability to achieve its objectives, assumptions were tested to determine if the project's strategy was valid. There is some evidence that the project board considered the implications, and documented the changes needed to the project in response. (all must be true)*
- 2: The project team identified relevant changes in the external environment that may present new opportunities or threats to the project's ability to achieve its objectives. There is some evidence that the project board discussed this, but relevant changes did not fully integrate in the project. (both must be true)
- 1: The project team considered relevant changes in the external environment since implementation began, but there is no evidence that the project team considered these changes to the project as a result.

Evidence:

Throughout the project implementation, the team has undertaken periodic reviews of the changes of external environment and reported to the donors, partners and the project board on the adjustment actions needed to meet the new opportunities and challenges. There are several such instances:

(i) Taking into account the structural changes at the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (amalgamation of several Ministries into one), it was agreed that the piloting of participatory mainstreaming instruments will be implemented with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (Participatory Gender Audit, Gender Impact Assessment), which was more realistic time- and resource wise.

(ii) Taken into account parallel effort on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) by GIZ, the synergy was discussed between UN Women, UNDP and GIZ and model approach decided on where the parties have their mutually reinforcing programmatic contribution. Also, it was agreed among the donors (SDC, ADA) and the partners, that the Manual on GRB developed for the local self-governments shall be a joint product and reflect the knowledge generated in respective project components of UNDP and GIZ.

(iii) In the period of compound crisis (COVID19 pandemic and conflict) number of programmatic activities were revisited to respond to the context and integrate elements of crisis response and early recovery (expert support to Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, new activities on psycho-social support and recovery in bordering areas, and other). Respective repurposing and budget revisions were undertaken in agreement with the main project partner (UN Women), donor (SDC) and respective ministry representatives (members of project board). All intervention revisions were reported in respective Project Board Meetings and meetings with Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (the minutes are attached). Ad-hoc/need-based communications/zoom meetings were held with project board members (RA Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, RA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure) concerning the project progress, as well as the repurposed programmatic components.

(iv) Influenced by the pandemic, online modality was applied for capacity building and technical assistance activities, including an additional training for beneficiaries on how to use Zoom application.

List of Uploaded Documents			
#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	Minutes_OutcomeBoardfor2019_WEESCWYILD_ENG_10396_301 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/Minutes_OutcomeBoardfor2019_WEESCWYILD_ENG_10396_301.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 11:38:00 AM
2	Minutes_OutcomeBoardfor2021_WEESC_ENG_10396_301 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/Minutes_OutcomeBoardfor2021_WEESC_ENG_10396_301.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 11:40:00 AM
3	WEESCProjectMeetingwithMLSA_15Dec2020_10396_301 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/WEESCProjectMeetingwithMLSA_15Dec2020_10396_301.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 12:09:00 PM
4	WEESC_RepurposedActivities_2021_Final003_10396_301 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/WEESC_RepurposedActivities_2021_Final003_10396_301.docx)	natalya.harutyunyan@undp.org	11/8/2021 9:24:00 AM

2. Was the project aligned with the thematic focus of the Strategic Plan?

- 3: *The project responded to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan (SP) and adopted at least one Signature Solution . The project's RRF included all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true)*
- 2: The project responded to at least one of the developments settings¹ as specified in the Strategic Plan. The project's RRF included at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true)
- 1: While the project may have responded to a partner's identified need, this need falls outside of the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.

Evidence:

The project was designed and implemented in proper alignment with the Strategic plan, as specified in the project document (See attached ProDoc, section V. RESULTS FRAMEWORK), contributing to the following high level targets:

UNDAF/Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:

Outcome 1 of UNDAF 2016-2020: "By 2020, Armenia's competitiveness is improved and people, especially vulnerable groups, have greater access to sustainable economic opportunities"

Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:

1.3. Poverty rate decreased Baseline: 32 (2013) Target:18 (2020) Indicator 1.4: Unemployment rates disaggregated by sex, age and region, improved. Baseline (2013): Unemployment rate: 16.2 Female: 18.1; male: 14.4 Urban: 23.4; rural: 6 Youth (15-24) 33.1 (2013) Target (2020): Unemployment rate:13 Female: 15; Male: 12 Urban: 19; rural: 5 Youth: 30

Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: output: 1.6.1. Country-led measures accelerated to advance gender equality and women's empowerment

The project responded also to Signature Solutions 6: Strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. 30% of project beneficiaries are women from vulnerable groups.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	ProdocWEESC_ARMFINAL_10396_302 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/ProdocWEESC_ARMFINAL_10396_302.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 11:59:00 AM

Relevant**Quality Rating: Exemplary**

3. Were the project's targeted groups systematically identified and engaged, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, to ensure the project remained relevant for them?

- 3: *Systematic and structured feedback was collected over the project duration from a representative sample of beneficiaries, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, as part of the project's monitoring system. Representatives from the targeted groups were active members of the project's governance mechanism (i.e., the project board or equivalent) and there is credible evidence that their feedback informs project decision making. (all must be true)*
- 2: Targeted groups were engaged in implementation and monitoring, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized. Beneficiary feedback, which may be anecdotal, was collected regularly to ensure the project addressed local priorities. This information was used to inform project decision making. (all must be true to select this option)
- 1: Some beneficiary feedback may have been collected, but this information did not inform project decision making. This option should also be selected if no beneficiary feedback was collected
- Not Applicable

Evidence:

ProDoc (uploaded above) specified the target groups under section "Beneficiaries". In addition, the project beneficiary groups included also private companies committed to implement "Women Empowerment Principles" (WEPs) and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA), which received support in capacity strengthening and application of new tools on gender mainstreaming. The project team was in regular communication with all abovementioned beneficiaries to understand their limitations and emerging needs. Particularly in the context of the compound crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic and the hostilities in/around Nagorno-Karabakh, number of consultative sessions, including those in co-design format, were undertaken by the project team to discuss with beneficiaries the emerging priorities and needs for further repurpose/response actions. Beneficiary women agreed to (i) continue capacity building via Zoom platform, for which the project helped them utilize Zoom applications, and (ii) cancel all experience exchange activities, adhering to the Ministry of Health recommendations on limitations during the pandemic. Based on the propositions and feedback received from WEPs companies, the project has made certain revisions on designing capacity building and WEPs signing ceremony events. As the result of the discussions with MLSA, changes were made regarding the implementation of Participatory Gender Audit recommendations as well as the scope of introduction of Gender Impact Assessment at the MLSA.

While the communication and feedback with the grassroots level beneficiaries and the WEPs companies was conducted via ZOOM, the communication with MLSA is reflected in meeting minutes (see WEESC ProjectMeetingwithMLSA_15Dec2020 uploaded under Point 1).

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

4. Did the project generate knowledge, and lessons learned (i.e., what has worked and what has not) and has this knowledge informed management decisions to ensure the continued relevance of the project towards its stated objectives, the quality of its outputs and the management of risk?

- *3: Knowledge and lessons learned from internal or external sources (gained, for example, from Peer Assists, After Action Reviews or Lessons Learned Workshops) backed by credible evidence from evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, analysis and monitoring were discussed in project board meetings and reflected in the minutes. There is clear evidence that changes were made to the project to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true)*
- 2: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by relatively limited evidence, drawn mainly from within the project, were considered by the project team. There is some evidence that changes were made to the project as a result to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true)
- 1: There is limited or no evidence that knowledge and lessons learned were collected by the project team. There is little or no evidence that this informed project decision making.

Evidence:

First, the data on knowledge and lessons learnt were collected during the project implementation through (i) direct observations of the project team, (ii) interactions with project beneficiaries and stakeholders, (iii) data collected by the project implementing partners (Green Lane NGO, and their subcontractor "3AR Strategy" LTD). Based on lessons learned from the beneficiary groups, online trainings and workshops were adjusted to their needs (e.g., topics, support with installing and using Zoom, adding psychosocial support interventions to address needs emerged in aftermath of NK crisis, linking farmers with marketing platforms). Also, the workload of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs increased as a key agency addressing the consequences of the double-crisis, limiting the availability of key officials to properly engage in and support respective project interventions within the Ministry, which necessitated certain revisions in project plans. The project progress, as well as lessons learned (in form of opportunities and challenges) were presented during the Project Board and MLSA meeting (see respective minutes uploaded under Question 1 above).

Second, the project final evaluation, commissioned by UN Women, provided a credible evidence on the lessons learned and respective revisions in the course of project implementation to address them. The respective recommendations suggested in the final evaluation were duly considered for and during design of the Project's 2nd main phase.

Respective note is made in attached ProDoc of WE ESC Phase 2.(page 3, "Opportunities", 1st paragraph; page 6, "Strategy")

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	AM_ProDoc_WEESCII_UNDP_Final_10396_304 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/AM_ProDoc_WEESCII_UNDP_Final_10396_304.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/8/2021 11:10:00 AM

5. Was the project sufficiently at scale, or is there potential to scale up in the future, to meaningfully contribute to development change?

- 3: *There was credible evidence that the project reached sufficient number of beneficiaries (either directly through significant coverage of target groups, or indirectly, through policy change) to meaningfully contribute to development change.*
- 2: While the project was not considered at scale, there are explicit plans in place to scale up the project in the future (e.g. by extending its coverage or using project results to advocate for policy change).
- 1: The project was not at scale, and there are no plans to scale up the project in the future.

Evidence:

As reported by the final evaluation, the project has achieved its targets and overachieved the latter for Outcome 1 "Women, particularly the poor and socially excluded, use skills, economic opportunities and relevant information to be self-employed and/or to join the formal labour sector in Armenia (grass-roots level). Considering the success of respective project interventions, the project's 2nd phase (2021-2024) was designed jointly with UN Women and agreed with donors considering scaling up in the same geographic locations and in Yerevan, as an additional location, with respective budget increase of 41.3% (Phase 1 budget 637,000 USD, Phase 2 budget 900,000 USD). UN Women and UNDP agreement is being processed to be signed in end of November 2021.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

Principled**Quality Rating: Satisfactory**

6. Were the project's measures (through outputs, activities, indicators) to address gender inequalities and empower women relevant and produced the intended effect? If not, evidence-based adjustments and changes were made.

- 3: *The project team gathered data and evidence through project monitoring on the relevance of the measures to address gender inequalities and empower women. Analysis of data and evidence were used to inform adjustments and changes, as appropriate. (both must be true)*
- 2: The project team had some data and evidence on the relevance of the measures to address gender inequalities and empower women. There is evidence that at least some adjustments were made, as appropriate. (both must be true)
- 1: The project team had limited or no evidence on the relevance of measures to address gender inequalities and empowering women. No evidence of adjustments and/or changes made. This option should also be selected if the project has no measures to address gender inequalities and empower women relevant to the project results and activities.

Evidence:

Gender equality and women participation have been core elements and were directly targeted by the project. The project was implemented in full compliance with its ProDoc (uploaded under Question 1), with Gender marker 3, and contributing to 2018-2021 UNDP Strategic Plan Output 1.6.1: Country-led measures accelerated to advance gender equality and women's empowerment; as well as SDG 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"; with target 5.5 of "Ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life."

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

7. Were social and environmental impacts and risks successfully managed and monitored?

- 3: Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. Appropriate assessments conducted where required (i.e., Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for High risk projects and some level of social and environmental assessment for Moderate risk projects as identified through SESP). Relevant management plan(s) developed for identified risks through consultative process and implemented, resourced, and monitored. Risks effectively managed or mitigated. If there is a substantive change to the project or change in context that affects risk levels, the SESP was updated to reflect these changes. (all must be true)
- 2: *Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. Appropriate assessments conducted where required (i.e., Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for High risk projects and some level of social and environmental assessment for Moderate risk projects as identified through SESP). Relevant management plan(s) developed, implemented and monitored for identified risks. OR project was categorized as Low risk through the SESP.*
- 1: Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. For projects categorized as High or Moderate Risk, there was no evidence that social and environmental assessments completed and/or management plans or measures development, implemented or monitored. There are substantive changes to the project or changes in the context but SESP was not updated. (any may be true)

Evidence:

The project has been categorized as Low risk through SESP. Meantime, through capacity building and technical advice project beneficiary farmers were trained in and encouraged to apply environmentally friendly practices of agriculture and land cultivation.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

8. Were grievance mechanisms available to project-affected people and were grievances (if any) addressed to ensure any perceived harm was effectively mitigated?

- 3: Project-affected people actively informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism (SRM/SECU) and how to access it. If the project was categorized as High or Moderate Risk through the SESP, a project -level grievance mechanism was in place and project affected people informed. If grievances were received, they were effectively addressed in accordance with SRM Guidance. (all must be true)
- 2: *Project-affected people informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism and how to access it. If the project was categorized as High Risk through the SESP, a project -level grievance mechanism was in place and project affected people informed. If grievances were received, they were responded to but faced challenges in arriving at a resolution.*
- 1: Project-affected people was not informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism. If grievances were received, they were not responded to. (any may be true)

Evidence:

The project-affected people were informed about UN DP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism and how to access it. Since the inception of the project no grievances were received by UNDP.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

Management & Monitoring**Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory**

9. Was the project's M&E Plan adequately implemented?

- 3: The project had a comprehensive and costed M&E plan. Baselines, targets and milestones were fully populated. Progress data against indicators in the project's RRF was reported regularly using credible data sources and collected according to the frequency stated in the Plan, including sex disaggregated data as relevant. Any evaluations conducted, if relevant, fully meet decentralized evaluation standards, including gender UNEG standards. Lessons learned, included during evaluations and/or After-Action Reviews, were used to take corrective actions when necessary. (all must be true)
- 2: *The project costed M&E Plan, and most baselines and targets were populated. Progress data against indicators in the project's RRF was collected on a regular basis, although there was may be some slippage in following the frequency stated in the Plan and data sources was not always reliable. Any evaluations conducted, if relevant, met most decentralized evaluation standards. Lessons learned were captured but were used to take corrective actions. (all must be true)*
- 1: The project had M&E Plan, but costs were not clearly planned and budgeted for, or were unrealistic. Progress data was not regularly collected against the indicators in the project's RRF. Evaluations did not meet decentralized evaluation standards. Lessons learned were rarely captured and used. Select this option also if the project did not have an M&E plan.

Evidence:

The baseline data and targets were recorded in the project tracking tool that was being updated monthly, based on the regularly collected data and field monitoring. Project update and reflection meetings were held at least on monthly basis with UN Women (as the principal recipient of the funding), as well as reflection meetings were held with the local project implementing partner Green Lane NGO to capture lessons learned and decide on corrective actions. Based on that, challenges and implementation risks caused by the pandemic and the NK conflict were thoroughly analyzed and respective adjustments were made in carrying out activities and revising the project budget.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

10. Was the project's governance mechanism (i.e., the project board or equivalent) function as intended?

- 3: *The project's governance mechanism operated well, and was a model for other projects. It met in the agreed frequency stated in the project document and the minutes of the meetings were all on file. There was regular (at least annual) progress reporting to the project board or equivalent on results, risks and opportunities. It is clear that the project board explicitly reviewed and used evidence, including progress data, knowledge, lessons and evaluations, as the basis for informing management decisions (e.g., change in strategy, approach, work plan.) (all must be true to select this option)*
- 2: The project's governance mechanism met in the agreed frequency and minutes of the meeting are on file. A project progress report was submitted to the project board or equivalent at least once per year, covering results, risks and opportunities. (both must be true to select this option)
- 1: The project's governance mechanism did not meet in the frequency stated in the project document over the past year and/or the project board or equivalent was not functioning as a decision-making body for the project as intended.

Evidence:

The project governance mechanism, as outlined in P roDoc (uploaded above), has been highly participato ry. In addition to the Board, represented by the RA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructur e, the project also invited annual stakeholders' meeti ngs with participation of more than 20 counterparts f rom government (at all levels), donors, international organizations, civil society organizations, private sec tor and other. Both Board and Stakeholder meetings were conducted on annual basis. At the meeting the project progress was presented and discussed, appr oaches validated, new opportunities explored, effort s of counterparts coordinated, partnerships and syn ergies planned (see Stakeholder meeting minutes at tached as well as minutes attached under Question 1).

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	StakeholdersmeetingReport_10396_310 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/StakeholdersmeetingReport_10396_310.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 2:40:00 PM
2	Minutes_UNWomen-UNDPStakeholdermeeting_20Feb_10396_310 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/Minutes_UNWomen-UNDPStakeholdermeeting_20Feb_10396_310.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 2:41:00 PM
3	Minutes_OutcomeBoardfor2021_WEESC_ENG_10396_310 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/Minutes_OutcomeBoardfor2021_WEESC_ENG_10396_310.docx)	natalya.harutyunyan@undp.org	11/9/2021 11:05:00 AM

11. Were risks to the project adequately monitored and managed?

- 3: *The project monitored risks every quarter and consulted with the key stakeholders, security advisors, to identify continuing and emerging risks to assess if the main assumptions remained valid. There is clear evidence that relevant management plans and mitigating measures were fully implemented to address each key project risk and were updated to reflect the latest risk assessment. (all must be true)*
- 2: The project monitored risks every year, as evidenced by an updated risk log. Some updates were made to management plans and mitigation measures.
- 1: The risk log was not updated as required. There was may be some evidence that the project monitored risks that may affected the project's achievement of results, but there is no explicit evidence that management actions were taken to mitigate risks.

Evidence:

The project has regularly monitored and analyzed the risks and updated the risk log as needed. The risk log update done in Dec 2020 informed the adjustments of some project activities and budget resources, agreed with the donor. In follow-up, Risk Log initiated in April 2021 informed adjusting the final activities of the project and designing future activities of WEE SC project Phase 2 (See risk logs attached).

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	WEESProDocRisklogupdate_Dec2020_10396_311 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/WEESProDocRisklogupdate_Dec2020_10396_311.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 3:07:00 PM
2	Annex_Risk_Log_WEESCII_10396_311 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/Annex_Risk_Log_WEESCII_10396_311.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 3:08:00 PM

Efficient**Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory**

12. Adequate resources were mobilized to achieve intended results. If not, management decisions were taken to adjust expected results in the project's results framework.

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

Based on the project work plan, the financial resources were secured for the entire project implementation period until July 2021; adequate human resources were secured as well.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

13. Were project inputs procured and delivered on time to efficiently contribute to results?

- 3: The project had a procurement plan and kept it updated. The project quarterly reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs in a timely manner and addressed them through appropriate management actions. (all must be true)
- 2: *The project had updated procurement plan. The project annually reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs in a timely manner and addressed them through appropriate management actions. (all must be true)*
- 1: The project did not have an updated procurement plan. The project team may or may not have reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs regularly, however management actions were not taken to address them.

Evidence:

The project ensured that the procurement of goods and services are conducted in compliance with UNDP Procurement SOP and regulations. Noteworthy, that since the grassroots level of the project Outcome 1 was implemented by the local partner, the procurement needs only implied limited items for the office operation.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

14. Was there regular monitoring and recording of cost efficiencies, taking into account the expected quality of results?

- 3: *There is evidence that the project regularly reviewed costs against relevant comparators (e.g., other projects or country offices) or industry benchmarks to ensure the project maximized results delivered with given resources. The project actively coordinated with other relevant ongoing projects and initiatives (UNDP or other) to ensure complementarity and sought efficiencies wherever possible (e.g. joint activities.) (both must be true)*
- 2: The project monitored its own costs and gave anecdotal examples of cost efficiencies (e.g., spending less to get the same result,) but there was no systematic analysis of costs and no link to the expected quality of results delivered. The project coordinated activities with other projects to achieve cost efficiency gains.
- 1: There is little or no evidence that the project monitored its own costs and considered ways to save money beyond following standard procurement rules.

Evidence:

The project has regularly monitored the cost-efficiency of its activities and actively collaborated with local partners for contributions. The project also capitalized on resources made available by other UNDP project, international organizations operating in the area, as well as the local communities. Example: Communities targeted by WEESC project to implement gender sensitive Annual Work Planning (AWP) and Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), were also targeted by GIZ to support the communities in AWP and GRB processes. Hence, as agreed, only GIZ continued facilitating AWP and GRB processes, while UNDP's role got limited to ensuring community women participation and gender mainstreaming of those processes. The savings in the budget were directed to other programmatic activities based on the needs agreed with the donor and stakeholders. See the minutes of UNDP-GIZ coordination meeting.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	Meetingminutes5_07.09.2020_final_10396_314 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/Meetingminutes5_07.09.2020_final_10396_314.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 5:16:00 PM

Effective

Quality Rating: Exemplary

15. Was the project on track and delivered its expected outputs?

- Yes
 No

Evidence:

The project has delivered almost all of its expected outputs, with partial completion of activities related to the institutionalization of Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA), as well as respective capacity building of a national institution to further offer gender mainstreaming trainings locally. This was reasoned by the continual structural changes at the MLSA and its operational units, as well as changing priorities, workload and availability of respective key officials caused by the consequences of the double crisis. Initially it was planned that the “National Institute of Labor and Social Research” (NILSR) would be the state institution to adapt the training materials on gender mainstreaming and GIA. However, since 2020 it was unclear if the NILSR would remain operational or would be dissolved, and another structural unit would substitute it with respective functions of providing research capacity, sector expertise and training. With such ambiguity, the project chose to involve the NILSR key gender expert (head of department) as a consultant to both co-facilitate the gender training for MLSA as well as to take part in GIA training (see the project's last quarterly report attached).

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
1	Annex6_WEESCproject_UNDP-ARM_Q2_2021_10396_315 (https://intranet.undp.org/apps/ProjectQA/QAFormDocuments/Annex6_WEESCproject_UNDP-ARM_Q2_2021_10396_315.docx)	armen.bezhanyan@undp.org	11/6/2021 5:49:00 PM

16. Were there regular reviews of the work plan to ensure that the project was on track to achieve the desired results, and to inform course corrections if needed?

- 3: Quarterly progress data informed regular reviews of the project work plan to ensure that the activities implemented were most likely to achieve the desired results. There is evidence that data and lessons learned (including from evaluations /or After-Action Reviews) were used to inform course corrections, as needed. Any necessary budget revisions were made. (both must be true)
- 2: There was at least one review of the work plan per year with a view to assessing if project activities were on track to achieving the desired development results (i.e., outputs.) There may or may not be evidence that data or lessons learned were used to inform the review(s). Any necessary budget revisions have been made.
- 1: While the project team may have reviewed the work plan at least once over the past year to ensure outputs were delivered on time, no link was made to the delivery of desired development results. Select this option also if no review of the work plan by management took place.

Evidence:

The regular reflections by the project team and implementing partners have been recorded and reviewed on quarterly basis, respective activity and budget adjustments were made, agreed with the donor and reflected in respective quarterly reports to the donor. The responsiveness of the project in regards to addressing emerging challenges and opportunities was reported during project board and stakeholder meetings (minutes are attached under Question 1), as well as it was confirmed by the final evaluator (commissioned by UN Women).

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

17. Were the targeted groups systematically identified and engaged, prioritizing the marginalized and excluded, to ensure results were achieved as expected?

- 3: *The project targeted specific groups and/or geographic areas, identified by using credible data sources on their capacity needs, deprivation and/or exclusion from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. There is clear evidence that the targeted groups were reached as intended. The project engaged regularly with targeted groups over the past year to assess whether they benefited as expected and adjustments were made if necessary, to refine targeting. (all must be true)*
- 2: The project targeted specific groups and/or geographic areas, based on some evidence of their capacity needs, deprivation and/or exclusion from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. Some evidence is provided to confirm that project beneficiaries are members of the targeted groups. There was some engagement with beneficiaries in the past year to assess whether they were benefiting as expected. (all must be true)
- 1: The project did not report on specific targeted groups. There is no evidence to confirm that project beneficiaries are populations have capacity needs or are deprived and/or excluded from development opportunities relevant to the project area of work. There is some engagement with beneficiaries to assess whether they benefited as expected, but it was limited or did not occurred in the past year.
- Not Applicable

Evidence:

The target groups of the project were identified and engaged from the beginning of project activities, based on the selection criteria set forth in the ProDoc. The selection criteria specifically focused on inclusion of the poor and, socially excluded and vulnerable populations, requiring that 30% of beneficiary women should be from those vulnerable groups. The project has achieved and overachieved the required target (see ProDoc attached under Question 2, and the last quarter donor report attached under Question 15). UNDP together with its implementing partners has been in regular communication with the project beneficiaries, including during on-line capacity building events, participatory discussions of project implementation on challenges related to the pandemic and the consequences of military conflict. Respective revisions of activities were regularly consulted with them and adjusted accordingly.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

Sustainability & National Ownership

Quality Rating: **Satisfactory**

18. Were stakeholders and national partners fully engaged in the decision-making, implementation and monitoring of the project?

- 3: Only national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) were used to fully implement and monitor the project. All relevant stakeholders and partners were fully and actively engaged in the process, playing a lead role in project decision-making, implementation and monitoring. (both must be true)
- 2: *National systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) were used to implement and monitor the project (such as country office support or project systems) were also used, if necessary. All relevant stakeholders and partners were actively engaged in the process, playing an active role in project decision-making, implementation and monitoring. (both must be true)*
- 1: There was relatively limited or no engagement with national stakeholders and partners in the decision-making, implementation and/or monitoring of the project.
- Not Applicable

Evidence:

For respective project interventions, the comprehensive and timely engagement of national, regional and local government stakeholders has been ensured both by UNDP and its implementing partners, including through membership of respective Government representatives at the Project Board for their full ownership in decision making. The intervention priorities and approaches were fully aligned with RA government agenda and respective policies and strategies.

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19. Were there regular monitoring of changes in capacities and performance of institutions and systems relevant to the project, as needed, and were the implementation [arrangements](#)⁸ adjusted according to changes in partner capacities?

- 3: Changes in capacities and performance of national institutions and systems were assessed/monitored using clear indicators, rigorous methods of data collection and credible data sources including relevant HACT assurance activities. Implementation arrangements were formally reviewed and adjusted, if needed, in agreement with partners according to changes in partner capacities. (all must be true)
- 2: Aspects of changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems were monitored by the project using indicators and reasonably credible data sources including relevant HACT assurance activities. Some adjustment was made to implementation arrangements if needed to reflect changes in partner capacities. (all must be true)*
- 1: Some aspects of changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems may have been monitored by the project, however changes to implementation arrangements have not been considered. Also select this option if changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems have not been monitored by the project.
- Not Applicable

Evidence:

The project regularly monitored changes in capacities of respective national partners. Given that MLSA is the main national focal point on gender equality and women affairs, the project conducted Participatory Gender Audit to allow the MLSA to conduct self-assessment of gender systems, identify the gaps of gender dimension of regulatory framework and internal management systems and propose solutions. Further, gender mainstreaming and GIA training was provided to key officials of MLSA and its structural units, and GIA methodology was piloted targeting one of MLSA programs. MLSA was supported to draft MLSA order for implementing PGA recommendations, pending for approval by the newly appointed Minister in July 2021.

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20. Were the transition and phase-out arrangements were reviewed and adjusted according to progress (including financial commitment and capacity).

- 3: The project’s governance mechanism regularly reviewed the project’s sustainability plan, including arrangements for transition and phase-out, to ensure the project remained on track in meeting the requirements set out by the plan. The plan was implemented as planned by the end of the project, taking into account any adjustments made during implementation. (both must be true)
- 2: *There was a review of the project’s sustainability plan, including arrangements for transition and phase-out, to ensure the project remained on track in meeting the requirements set out by the plan.*
- 1: The project may have had a sustainability plan but there was no review of this strategy after it was developed. Also select this option if the project did not have a sustainability strategy.

Evidence:

The project was initially planned to have multiple phases (up to 3), and the design of phase 2 has started during the last months of phase 1. The funding for phase 2 has been secured and a pre-PAC was conducted in online modality involving members of project board of phase 1 (who are also prospective members of phase 2 project board). Phase 2 is expected to start in end of November 2021.

The project sustainability and transition were reviewed by the project final evaluation process. The report includes discussion on transitioning the project to the second phase, including respective recommendations on program interventions and operational modalities.

See phase 2 ProDoc attached under Question 4

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QA Summary/Final Project Board Comments

The latest Outcome Board meeting was combined with stakeholders meeting, during which the project progress and results, as well as the Final (independent) Evaluation Results were presented (Evaluation commissioned by UN Women). According to the Evaluation, the UNDP Armenia segment of the WEESC was evaluated as successful, meeting and even exceeding the targets set. The Board also highly evaluated the broad partnership within the project, as well as its synergies with other ongoing initiatives. Especially, the agility of the project to adjust to emerging realities and crisis context was highly appreciated and request extended to continue to maintain the prism of crisis response and recovery in the Phase 2 of the project. Necessity and commitment towards economic empowerment of women was highlighted by both Government representatives, as well as donors.