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Resilient nations.

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| Reporting Agency:      | United Nations Development Programme   |
| Country:               | Armenia  |
| <b>PROGRESS REPORT</b> |  |
| Project:               | UNDP-GEF “Generate global environmental benefits through environmental education and raising awareness of stakeholders” medium-sized Project 00091047/00081989 |
| Reporting period:      | January – June 2018  |

## I. PURPOSE

**The aim of the project** is to expand the capacity of Armenia to generate global environmental benefits through environmental education and raising awareness of stakeholders to implement Rio Convention strategies.

**The project's objective** is to strengthen the capacity to use environmental education and awareness raising as tools to address natural resource management issues. It will, on one hand, increase the public knowledge on the environment and the need to protect nature, and, on the other hand, transfer the required knowledge to the targeted beneficiaries to allow them to be development actors without harming the environment. Through the activities of the project, it will include support for the dissemination of environmental information on state-of-the-art technologies for climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation of biodiversity and prevention of soil degradation. It will also provide resources for raising the capacity of decision-makers in governing bodies, who are promoting the sustainable development of the country.

**Partners:** The Implementing Partner and the Responsible Party of the Project is the RA Ministry of Nature Protection (MoNP). The senior beneficiary of the project is the RA Ministry of Education and Science (MoES).

**Funds:** The Project is funded by GEF and co-funded by UNDP.

## II. RESOURCES

The resources to the Project come from GEF and UNDP TRAC allocations totaling to 750,000.00 USD (Y2018: USD 375,711.21 - GEF: 367,442.21 USD and UNDP: 8,269.00 USD).

## III. RESULTS

**Activity 1: Enhanced legal, policy, institutional and strategic frameworks to strengthen EE and raising awareness of stakeholder as natural resource management tools.**

- **Support the development of National Strategy on Environmental Education.** In response to the request from the RoA Ministry of Nature Protection, the Project supported the development of “National Strategy on Ecological Education and Upbringing”, which was approved by the RoA Government in February 2018. In follow-up of the Strategy Action Plan, the Project launched the development of a package on legal instruments/amendments related to Environmental Education (EE). The scope of work was discussed and approved by the MoNP, the ToR for the “Development of draft legislative frameworks and package of recommendations for mainstreaming Environmental Education into National strategies” was designed, through competitive selection process “Avenue Consulting Group” was contracted. The implementation will begin in July 2018.
- **Support in the development of Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) website for Armenia.** In response to the request from the RoA Government to assist EITI implementation process of Armenia the Project supported the development of respective web-platform. The EITI website aims to support the implementation of Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. Through competitive selection process “Helix Consulting LLC” was contracted at the end 2017. The website with respective backend functionalities was developed as of June 2018.
- **The development and production of 4 short animation films on implementation of the three Rio Conventions and Aarhus convention in Armenia.** Through competitive selection process “Sahakyants Animation Studio” was contracted. Scenario for UN Convention of Biodiversity and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change were developed, two (2) draft animations are produced. The development of scenarios on UN Convention to Combat desertification and Aarhus Convention is ongoing.
- **Workshops on “Environmental Law”.** Local Individual Consultant for conducting workshops on “Environmental Law” was recruited through direct contracting modality. Two (2) workshops for almost i) 30 representatives of governmental entities and ii) 25 mass media and CBOs were conducted.
- **The improvement and maintenance of Ministry of Nature Protection official website.** To ensure timely and accurate maintenance of the RoA Ministry of Nature Protection official website (MoNP) (<http://www.mnp.am/>) TOR for the provision of consultancy services was developed. Through direct recruitment modality the consultant was hired. The actual works started from April 2018, necessary backend and frontend actions, including SEO were completed.

**Activity 2: Improved capacity of relevant government and educational entities to integrate EE and awareness raising into programmes and projects as tools for natural resource management.**

- **Development of environmental educational materials for decision-makers.** The development of eleven (11) training modules to be incorporated into the regular training programme of civil and community servants was finalized by “AUA Fund” (contacted on 12 October, 2017, RFP 49/17) in June 2018. The modules focus on environmental protection and natural resource management as an integral part of sustainable development agenda of the country. The developed modules were also presented and discussed during the organized Focus Group on June 18, 2018, attended by sector-specific specialists. The comments and

feedback from the Focus group attendees and the project team were taken into consideration and respective amendments were conducted.

**Activity 3: Developed capacity of community based organizations (CBOs) to use EE and awareness raising as tools for natural resource management.**

- **Support the delivery of training sessions through CBOs.** The evaluation of proposals under Environmental Challenge Call announced in October 2017 was finalized. Three (3) regional CBOs were contracted to implement projects under Micro-capital Grant Modality:
  1. “Generation of Light“ Educational foundation, “Nature is God’s gift to human: the lord and steward of nature” Project
  2. “Third Nature“ NGO, The increasing knowledge on the innovative model of electricity generation and distribution at the community level will bring the opportunity to mitigate climate change” Project
  3. “NGO Center” Civil Society Development NGO, “Better informed and responsible community” Project

**Grantee Highlights:**

- ✓ “Third Nature“ NGO developed three (3) educational booklets, covering the topics of: i) Energy cooperatives; ii) Local smart networks/Micro-networks; iii) Change in energy and climate change; Informative sessions/meeting were held in 15 rural communities of Shirak Marz and dissemination of awareness raising materials was conducted. Overall, 196 local residents (43F and 153M) participated in the meetings.
- ✓ “Generation of Light“ Educational foundation published informative-analytical booklet “Nature is God’s gift to human: the lord and steward of nature”, which is planned for dissemination among training participants.
- ✓ “NGO Center” Civil Society Development NGO organized 6 events-discussions with participation of 154 representatives from local 6 communities. The event-discussions covered various topics related to environmental issues and natural resources management.
- **Development and facilitation of communication/public awareness campaigns related to implementation of three Rio Conventions and Aarhus convention in Armenia.** TOR for recruitment of a company was developed, and following UNDP procurement standards, RFP 030/18 for the procurement of services for development and facilitation of communication/public awareness campaigns related to implementation of three Rio Conventions and Aarhus convention in Armenia is under finalization process. The respective vendor will be contracted in July 2018.
- **Climate Change Education and Awareness Project – Climate Box.** In cooperation with the Russian Trust Fund the activities on implementation of the “Climate Box” (CB) Project were launched, including:
  - the manual was translated and localized;
  - piloting of CB Project was discussed with representatives of MoES and National Institute of Education and organization of ToT by experts from Russia is tentatively planned for August 2018;
  - In the scope of the project international conference in October 2018 is planned to be held in Armenia. The objective of the conference is to provide a platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange and peer learning for pro-active teachers from 7 beneficiary countries (Armenia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan,

Uzbekistan, Moldova) and Russia and help to develop methodological recommendations for the implementation of CB Project.

- **“Facing the Climate: Swedish and Armenian satirical cartoonists get you thinking.”**

On the occasion of the World Environment Day, the Project partnered with UNDP Climate Change programme, the RA Ministry of Nature Protection, and the Embassy of Sweden to Armenia to organize exhibition entitled “Facing the Climate: Swedish and Armenian satirical cartoonists get you thinking.” The aim of the exhibition was to promote discussions on climate change and environmental protection issues, and offer new and promising solutions to these global challenges. Armenian and Swedish cartoonist were invited to exhibit their works highlighting and covering issues and impacts of climate change, global warming etc.

**Activity 4: Project management.**

- Communication and Outreach consultant was recruited. UNDP official website Project page was updated with respective outputs. Daily support to project outreach activities is ensured. Respective coverage of organized events, including training, RFP/RFQs, are highlighted via short informative blurbs and shared via UNDP Armenia official Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/UNDPArmenia/photos/pcb.1769686469779281/1769685826446012/?type=3&theater>

- Project Mid-Term Review (MTR) was finalized. Following the Project team feedback and revisions, certain amendments in the finalization of the report were provided by the consultant to ensure compatibility with the TOR requirements. Management response was developed.
- Project Technical Task Leader participated in the “Communication for development” workshop on 24-28.01.2018, Tbilisi, Georgia aimed at building communication Strategy/Media Campaign on Environmental Topics. The event was organized by GIZ and attended by officials (Ministries), staff of international organizations (GIZ and UNDP) implementing projects related to raising awareness on environmental issues, as well as representatives of CBOs from Armenia and Georgia.
- The project provided assistance to the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE Strategy for ESD Programme, Environment Division) in Geneva in organization of the national workshop on “Re-orienting technical and vocational education and training through education for sustainable development to support sustainable development and transition to a green economy in the Republic of Armenia”. The conference was attended by local and international experts, governmental officials and field-specialists, who had the opportunity to discuss ongoing issues and present international experiences.
- Following the official recommendation of the MTR and no-objection of the Project Board, the request for Project no-cost extension was sent to project coordination unit and 12 months no-cost extension was approved. Respective revisions of the project budget and work-plan were conducted.
- The Advisory Committee meeting was organized on 29 June, the final training modules developed by AUA were presented to the Advisory Committee members for validation.

#### **IV. FUTURE WORK PLAN**

The main tasks for the remaining period of 2018 work plan are as follows:

**Outcome 1: Enhanced legal, policy, institutional and strategic frameworks to**

**strengthen EE and raising awareness of stakeholder as natural resource management tools.**

***Output 1.1: Adequate legislation and policy frameworks are in place to implement obligations from the Rio and Aarhus Conventions related to environmental education and public awareness.***

- Based on Assessment of the national legislation and policy frameworks, as well as National Strategy on EE develop a recommendation on legal and/or policy instruments/ amendments related to EE to be submitted to Government for review and approval.
- Finalize the production of short animated films related to implementation of Rio and Aarhus conventions in Armenia.

***Output 1.2: Relevant institutions have the necessary mandates to use environmental education and public awareness as tools for environmental management.***

- Develop and implement actions to address prioritized institutional gaps and overlaps, including review and possibly revision of job description to integrate environmental concerns.
- Proceed with approval of respective EE curriculum by Civil Service Council and Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development.

**Outcome 2: Improved capacity of relevant government and educational entities to integrate EE and awareness raising into programmes and projects as tools for natural resource management.**

***Output 2.1: Capacity enhanced of key government and educational entities to integrate environmental education and public awareness into programmes and projects.***

- Support the development of new strategies, programmes and projects integrating environmental education and public awareness as tools to improve the management of natural resources at the national and local levels.
- ***Output 2.2: Integrated training programmes developed and delivered through training centers for civil servants; training centers for teachers and other existing relevant training mechanisms.***
- Finalize development of environmental education materials / curriculum for decision-makers and introduce them into regular training/retraining curriculum of civil and community servants.
- Develop digital educational materials, such as video lessons and others for decision-makers involved in natural resource management.
- Publish training materials for conducting training for decision-makers involved in natural resource management. The published educational materials (manuals for teachers and training participants) will be used as a tool for regular training/retraining of civil and community servants.
- Organize the second phase of ToTs for key stakeholders in different educational entities to build capacity to deliver EE programmes
- Support the delivery of training programmes for civil and community servants by training entities, particularly by Public administration academy of RA

**Outcome 3: Developed capacity of community based organizations (CBOs) to use**

**environmental education and awareness raising as tools for natural resource management.**

***Output 3.1: Capacity enhanced of CBOs to implement environmental education and public awareness campaigns.***

- Support activities to develop capacity of CBOs to deliver EE and PA programmes on global environmental issues and the obligation of Armenia under the Rio Conventions

***Output 3.2: Environmental education material is developed and delivery mechanisms are identified.***

- Support delivery of training sessions through CBOs aimed at raising awareness of public and decision-makers on natural resources management issues
- Support development of training and information materials such as brochure, videos, posters, etc.
- Support adaptation, translation and publication of Climate Box tool. Organize ToT workshops. Support implementation of trainings in pilot schools. Organize International conference in October 2018.
- Give public access of training/information materials.
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***Output 3.3: A Communication campaign developed and delivered through community based activities and national media.***

- Organize training for representatives of mass media aimed at raising awareness on legal frameworks related to environmental protection and sustainable NRM management
- Support the development and delivery of a communication campaigns, focused on raising community awareness on global environmental issues and on the Rio Conventions
- Raise environmental awareness and literacy of journalists.

**V. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION**

| <b>Budget for 2018<br/>(USD)</b> | <b>Actual Expenditures +<br/>Commitments<br/>(as of 30 June 2018)</b> | <b>Current Delivery Rate<br/>(as of 30 June, 2018)</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| USD 375,711.21                   | USD 146,119.83  | 39 %   |