### Reporting Agency: United Nations Development Programme Country: Republic of Armenia

### **ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

### No. and title: 00091029 Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities

### Reporting period: 01 January – 31 December 2016

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Overall objectives of UNDP Projects in Armenia are fostering democratic governance, reducing poverty and regional disparities, environmental protection, electoral system reforms, and fostering economic activities at community level. Implementation of area-based projects aimed at creation of partnership-based implementation structures to convert participatory development plans into investment realities ensures the realization of economic development priorities and income generation opportunities.

During the reporting period the Project continued implementing the planned activities from the past reporting period. In order to avoid repeating the same projects in the past or currently in Tavush area, and in order to stay up-to-date with most recent developments of in the Marz, the Project staff continued to meet with major players in the field.

The Project continued to conduct meetings with various development partners (local, national and international) and private donors to ensure the development efforts are nor repeated and that they complement to each other’s work to increase the intervention impact. The Project keeps regular contacts also with the Marzpetaran, the Governor of Tavush Marz, and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia.

A total of 32 energy efficient greenhouses were installed by the end of 2016 in Aygedzor, Berdavan, Chinari, Dovegh, Koghb, Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur, Tavush, Voskepar, Voskevan for individual farmers. The Project identified Tavush cluster (Tavush and Chinchin) as a target for establishing an agro-machinery pool as well as Voskepar (Noyemberyan) cluster for establishing a collection center in the region for forest by-products and agricultural produce. The Project also identified a number of beneficiaries over 5 ha of land in Ditavan community for establishing fruit orchards with drip irrigation.

The Project continued to work with Koghb and Voskevan on implementing the agreements on repairing community infrastructures as prioritized in the Community Development Plans in the respective communities. The irrigation system construction project with Chinari community was finalized with the community which already identified their 20% co-funding. This intervention will result in decreased operational costs of the community infrastructures as well as increased water-saving practices in the communities of the Marz.

The Project works with WPF to identify areas of cooperation with the School Feeding Project where the Project can complement the WPF’s efforts in the region.

Because of escalation of violent border incidents in April 2016 the Project staff had to cancel several planned trips to the communities in Tavush Marz for safety precautions. Because of this some of the project implementation has been slightly delayed. However, as the security situation got de-escalated, the Project continued the planned regular visits to the communities to meet with beneficiaries and conduct required observation and examinations for possible community development interventions.

Detailed information about implemented projects is presented below.

### **I. RESOURCES**

**00091029 Integrated Support to Rural Development: Building Resilient Communities**

**Total Approved Budget: USD 5,024,988.70**

Government of Russian Federation: USD 5.024,988.70

### **II. RESULTS**

## Main activities implemented and achievements as of December 2016

Foreseen activities are either completed or in the handover stage. Detailed information related to the planned and actually implemented activities and achieved results as per June 2016 are shown below.

***Development Planning Component***

**Results:**

In 2015 UNDP rolled out a large-scale community development project which targets 45 vulnerable communities in Tavush region. Throughout the reporting period the project engaged more than 100 beneficiaries in needs assessment exercise reaching out to the vulnerable groups in local communities. Meanwhile UNDP brought together local self-government bodies (LSG), community based organizations and local population to understand the causality of the identified needs and their direct and indirect consequences to address the development challenges of the communities. By means of this, UNDP launched a community-oriented down to top process of planning the development of the communities for the upcoming four years integrating sustainable action plans of income-generation and infrastructure rehabilitation into the plans.

Throughout 2016 the Project targeted twelve communities in Tavush Marz, namely: Acharkut, Aygedzor, Aygepar, Berkaber, Chinari, Chinchin, Ditavan, Kirants, Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur, Nerkin Tsaghkavan, Tavush, Voskepar. The planning process yielded twelve community development plans which can serve as a basis for development of the mandatory five-year community development plans prepared by the LSGs. In close cooperation with LSGs and other community members at large (using integrated participatory planning methodology) the Project designed development plans and defined the priority projects which focus on efficient use of the human, social and physical capital assets of the community in an integrated and inclusive way. Besides the general introductory community meetings, overall 36 meeting with focus groups (local farmers, women, youth) were held in communities aimed at discussing in more details the community needs and brainstorming ways of possible solutions. The results of these discussions were summarized and included in the respective development plans of the communities. The final Community Development Plans were discussed during a Community Council meeting and were formally adopted by each Community Council with a special resolution.

**Expected Impacts:**

The Community Development Plans will have a practical application in designing the intervention methods in the communities both by UNDP or other external donors as well as LSGs.

***Community Sustainability Activities – Agriculture and Agro-Processing Component***

**Results:**

Based on the Community Development Planning results, the Project installed 32 greenhouses to a total of nine communities in Noyemberyan and Berd Regions (Aygedzor, Berdavan, Chinari, Dovegh, Koghb, Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur, Tavush, Voskepar, Voskevan). Announcements for applying to get a greenhouse (135m2) were published in the aforementioned communities and the selection of final beneficiaries was made considering various criteria, including, but not limited the social vulnerability, enthusiasm, ability to cover part of the costs of the greenhouse, etc. The winner (CARD AgroService, Armenia) of the both open tenders for installing greenhouses in the communities completed the first phase of installation works (12 greenhouses) by the end of April 2016 and the second phase (20 greenhouses) will be completed by the end of December weather permitting. Armenian Relief Society (ARS), as per signed Memorandum of Intentions signed in December 2015, partnered with UNDP to provide the drip irrigation for all the greenhouses to reduce the overall costs of the greenhouses and make them more affordable for more vulnerable groups. Initially, the ARS committed to provide drip irrigation to 12 greenhouses, however, because of successful cooperation, the total amount of ARS contribution grew to 30 drip irrigation system for greenhouses. All greenhouses were provided with drip irrigation installed and all necessary seedlings, fertilizers, pest control, work tools and practical and theoretical consultations.

Based on the needs assessments of the communities, the Project considers other income-generating opportunities for cluster of communities in the region (including, an agricultural produce collection center for a cluster of communities in Voskepar cluster, establishing an agricultural machinery park in Tavush cluster, providing small-scale agroproduction units, and establishment of at least 5ha or new orchards in Ditavan community). The Statements of Intent were signed with target cluster of communities and the implementation works will be carried out in 2017.

**Expected Impacts:**

* Improved economic conditions of the beneficiaries of greenhouses.
* Employment opportunities for local population

***Community Sustainability Activities – Energy Efficiency/Sustainable Water Management/Infrastructure Rehabilitation Component***

**Results:**

Based on the already signed Statements of Intent with Koghb and Voskepar Communities, the Project proceeded with procurement of services and goods of above mentioned community infrastructure development projects. Namely, the works of partial renovation and raising the energy efficiency of Voskevan Culture House was completed in November 2016. As a result of the reconstruction, the energy efficiency of the building has been estimated to increase by 45% which will result in sufficiently less costs for heating and cooling the building.

In Koghb, tendering phases of the construction and procurement of Led luminaries were completed and contracts were awarded to correspondingly “Khachmishshin”, Armenia, for construction works and DST Trade, Russia, for providing LED luminaries. As a result of this intervention, the community will be able to save on street lighting component and have a safer environment in the center of the community due to improved lighting of the streets.

The Project signed a Statement of Intent with Chinari community to construct the internal network of irrigation over 54 ha of land which will drastically reduce water loss and result in increased income of over 80% of Chinari community. The construction works are expected to be completed in 2017.

**Expected Impacts:**

* Improved security in Koghb
* Decreased heating and cooling costs in Voskevan Culture House
* Improved irrigation system in Chinari.

### **III. FUTURE WORK PLAN**

Future work plan for 2017

* The Project will be implemented according to earlier-agreed appointment.
* The Project will expand to 8 more communities to design Integrated Community Development Plans in those communities and implement various income generation and community rehabilitation interventions as defined by the Project Document.
* The Project will finalize the establishment of Agro-machinery pool in Tavush, and creation of collection center in Noyemberyan(Voskepar) community
* The Project targets at establishing another 20 ha of new orchards coupled with drip irrigation systems in the region based on the needs identified during the planning phase.

### **IV. FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION**

