**Project Title:**

**"Enhance social inclusion of people with disabilities through mainstreaming inclusive approach into the vocational trainings institutions"**

Implemented by UNDP, Co-funded by Government of Finland and UNDP

**REPORT**

 January-November 2015

Table of Contents

1. Description 3
2. Abbreviations and acronyms 3
3. Executive summary 4

4. Recent developments in Turkmenistan in relation to social and economic integration

 of persons with disabilities ……………………………………….…………………… ………...4

1. Progress achieved under project outputs 5
2. Visibility 7
3. Project management 7
4. Project budget utilization in 2015 8

Annex I: Annual Work Plan 2016 11

1. **Description**

Project Title: Enhance social inclusion of people with disabilities through mainstreaming inclusive approach into the vocational trainings institutions

Beneficiary: Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan

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Partners: Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan, Ministry of Textile industry of Turkmenistan

Reporting Period: January – November 2015

Target country: Turkmenistan

Funding sources: Government of Finland, UNDP CO in Turkmenistan

1. **Abbreviations and acronyms**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AWP  | Annual Work Plan  |
| CRDP | Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  |
| DBST | Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan  |
| Etrap  | District  |
| Mejlis | Parliament of Turkmenistan  |
| PWDs | Persons with Disabilities  |
| UNDP  | United Nations Development Programme |
| Velayat | Region  |

1. **Executive summary**

The Project "Enhance social inclusion of people with disabilities through mainstreaming inclusive approach into the vocational trainings institutions" is implemented by UNDP Country Office Turkmenistan since January 2015 with financial support from the Government of Finland. The project is implemented on the basis of the Cost-sharing Agreement signed between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and UNDP, as well as on the basis of the Project Document signed between the Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan, Ministry of Textile Industry of Turkmenistan and UNDP.

The Project was designed with the key objective to promote employment opportunities for people with Disabilities (PWDs) through mainstreaming an inclusive approach into selected vocational training institutions.

The implementation of the Project started in January 2015 with duration until June 2016. The total budget of the Project is USD 161,781 со-funded by Government of Finland and UNDP.

1. **Recent developments in Turkmenistan in relation to social and economic integration of persons with disabilities**

Turkmenistan acceded to the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (PWDs) in 2008 and ratified its Optional Protocol in 2010. The national legislation envisions protection of right of persons with disabilities and guarantees their equal access to education, health services, and social welfare benefits.

A new Social Security Code of Turkmenistan, issued in 2012, aligns with many articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and expands opportunities for people with disabilities. The Government continues to demonstrate strong commitment to the introduction of social oriented policies and opportunities to create employment for people with disabilities (e.g. quotas for employers for hiring people with disabilities).

A new Law of Turkmenistan on Education issued in May 2013 contains articles which guarantee inclusive education, special educational standards, adaptive programs, and social support for children with disabilities.

At the same time, different challenges remain in the area of integration and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. Labour rehabilitation for people with disabilities has been widely recognized as one of the best ways for their full inclusion in society life.

Currently, there are a number of vocational institutions attached to many ministries such as the Ministries of Textile, Construction, Oil and Gas, Agriculture, Transportation, and Municipalities, and Education. Each of these intuitions design their own vocational training programmes. All of the vocational courses are provided on a paid basis to the clients, which creates additional obstacles for PWDs. While people with hearing and visual impairments have enrolled in the past in vocational training courses, they have often faced difficulties, as most courses have not planned for their special needs. Some of these special needs include sign language interpreters, adjustment of learning materials to an accessible format, and the use of assistive devices.

Vocational trainings and jobs provision for people with disabilities is a complicated process that requires, accessible and specially equipped spaces, organization of working or teaching processes, etc. In order to make the process of vocational trainings and employment of PWDs effective it is necessary to consider interests of each party to the process. This proposed project focus on vocational trainings and possible jobs provision for people with disabilities.

1. **Progress achieved under project outputs**

***Output 1:*** *A design for an inclusive model to facilitate PWDs to participate in vocational training courses completed, in keeping with the revised legislation.*

Project hired International Consultant and National Consultant for the project.

In the 1st stage of the assignment International Consultant jointly with National Consultant facilitated National Forum to present international best practices related to inclusive education for PWDs and to initiate dialogue among key national stakeholders regarding issues of provision of vocational trainings for PWDs. National Forum “Inclusive Society. State is guarantor of professional education and further employment of PWDs” was held on November 4, 2015. 15 representatives from different government ministries and public organizations, 2 members of the Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan, 4 UNDP staff took part in the Forum. Forum provided opportunity to initiate a dialogue among key stakeholders regarding issues of provision of vocational trainings for PWDs. During the panel discussion with representatives of the DBST, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Healthcare, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, and the National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights under President of Turkmenistan and other public organizations, participants discussed current situation, existing policy and practice, as well as support programs of the education and employment of people with disabilities in Turkmenistan. International Consultant introduced best international practices in the field of inclusive education and employment of PWDs.

As part of the assignment, National Expert is currently conducting survey among PWDs to identify their needs for professional education and employment. For remaining period of 2015, we plan to organize forum meetings with representatives of DBST and other stakeholders to discuss the national experts’ findings and recommendations regarding inclusive model of vocational training for PWDs.

***Output 2:*** *The existing 10 month vocational training programme, conducted by the Ministry of Textiles, reviewed and revised together with Ministries of Education and included an inclusive model ensuring the needs of the PWDs have been accommodated*

Under this Output, in the 2nd stage of the assignment, International Consultant jointly with National expert will review and revise existing 10-month vocational training program of the Ministry of Textile by integrating an inclusive model that accommodates the needs of the PWDs. Project targets piloting enrollment of 10 girls with hearing impairments to that revised vocational training programme in 2016.

At the end of the assignment the Consultants will submit to UNDP recommendations on inclusive model of vocational training for PWDs and further development of similar programs in the vocational training institutions of other sector Ministries of Turkmenistan.

Also, under this Output, there is scheduled study-visit abroad to learn vocational training of PWDs and their further employment. We expect that this activity will happen in December 2015.

***Output 3:*** *The Ministry of Textiles has prepared the necessary training materials and processes according to the revised curriculum, to accommodate potential PWDs in the 10 month training*

All of the activities under this Output will be conducted in 2016. Project intends to assist Textile College to prepare necessary training materials and other support to accommodate potential PWDs in the 10 month training process.

***Output 4:*** *Targeted PWDs have submitted applications to the textile 10 month vocational course and have received assistance throughout the course.*

Majority of the activities under this Output also will happen in 2016 after selection of potential PWDs to be enrolled in 10 month training programme of Textile College.

Currently, Project is in the process of hiring Specialist on Social Inclusion of PWDs (TOR developed and advertised). Major task of the Project Specialist is to prepare detailed report on current system of vocational education in Turkmenistan with description of functioning vocational training institutions and sources of its funding and establish working relationship with those training institutions. S/he will provide this data to BDST to expand opportunities for PWDs in the future.

S/he will also select potential candidates-persons with disabilities among members of the DBST for enrollment in 10-month vocational training courses of the Ministry of Textile industry of Turkmenistan and provide assistance to selected PWDs to prepare their application and other required documentation to take part in this training and other needed support.

Project is also in the process of hiring ICT Trainer to conduct regular computer classes for members of the DBST (TOR developed and advertised). ICT Trainer will work in the DBST and help its beneficiaries use the information and communication technologies using the computer class at DBST that was opened at DBST during the previous phase of the project. Project received funding for this activity from New Zealand Embassy in Moscow.

It is expected that selected PWDs to study at the Textile College will be taught to basic computer skills in these classes.

1. **Visibility**

Visibility of project activities was ensured through preparation and distribution of press releases developed in two languages, English and Russian. Press releases were developed after each event. Information on project activities was also shared through UNDP Turkmenistan website.

1. **Project management**

Project Document was signed by all involved partners in January 27, 2015. The project was registered by the Ministry of Adalat (Justice) of Turkmenistan on March 25, 2015.

In April 2015 full-time Project Assistant was hired.

Project Board Meeting was conducted on June 24, 2015 with participation of Chairman of Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan, Director of Textile College and UNDP staff. The components of project strategy, main approaches and expected outputs of the project was discussed. NPCs aired out their concerns regarding implementation of project activities. Project Board agreed upon urgent actions related to project implementation such as Project Manager Recruitment, arranging activities of the project according to AWP.

Hanekov Rahmanberdi was hired by UNDP Country Office and assumed his functions of the Project Manager on 20 July 2015. Mr. Hanekov has over 15 years of work experience in international organizations. He previously worked for such international organizations as UNDP, OSCE, US Peace Corps.

The Project Manager's office is located in the premises of the Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan.

On October 29, 2015 2nd Project Board Meeting was conducted with participation of partners from Deaf and Blind Society of Turkmenistan, Director of Textile College, representatives of the Government of Finland and UNDP staff. Minutes of the meeting is attached.

1. **Project budget utilization in 2015**

The total project expenses as of 16 November 2015 amounted to USD 32,284.00

Detailed financial report for each project output and relevant activities are provided in the

table below.

 **Financial report for each project output and relevant activities**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Output | Activities | Fiinding Source | Approved Budget in US$ for 2015 | Expenses in US$ for 2015 | Expenses in% |
| *Output 1*A design for an inclusive model to facilitate PWDs to participate in vocational training courses completed, in keeping with the revised legislation. | Activity 1.1: Establish an inter – ministerial/agency forum made up of senior staff from vocational training institutions (VTIs) in TK. | Gov of Finland | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Activity 1.2: Conduct a forum meeting to discuss the current provisions for incorporating PWDs into existing vocational trainings. | Gov of Finland | 0 | 5,895.00+ (3,930.00 in commitment) | % |
| Activity 1.3: Recruit national experts to prepare draft recommendations for an inclusive model on increasing access for PWDs into vocational trainings. | Gov of Finland | 2,000.00 | (2,000.00 in commitment) | 100% |
| Activity 1.4: Conduct forum meetings (min.2) to discuss (1) the national expert’s recommendations and agree an inclusive model to facilitate PWDs to participate in training courses conducted by vocational institutions (2) to agree a broad framework on how this model can be rolled out with VTIs. | Gov of Finland | 2,700.00 | 150.00 | 6% |
|  | Sub-total | 4,700.00 | 11,975.00 | 255% |
| *Output 2*The existing 10 month vocational training programme, conducted by the Ministry of Textiles, reviewed and revised together with Ministries of Education and included an inclusive model ensuring the needs of the PWDs have been accommodated  | Activity 2.1: Organize a study-visit abroad to learn how the needs of PWDs have been accommodated in the vocational intuitions | Gov of Finland | 20,000.00 | 0 | 0% |
| Activity 2.2: Recruit an international and national expert to carry out review of the vocational training programme (existing 10 month programme) conducted by the Ministry of Textiles together with Ministries of Education. Make recommendations on how to integrate the special needs of PWDs into the 10 month programme. Revise the programme accordingly. | Gov of Finland | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Activity 2.3: Conduct a forum meeting to share the revised programme. | **Gov of Finland** |  0 |  0 | 0% |
|  | Sub-total | 20,000.00 | 0 | 0% |
| Output 3Employment opportunities of persons with disabilities promoted | Activity 3.1: Recruit a national expert to assist the Ministry of Textiles to (1) prepare the necessary training materials and (2) processes to accommodate potential PWDs in the 10 month training. |  | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Activity 3.2: Discuss and agree how reasonable accommodations can be provided to PWDs during the training course. |  | 0 | 0 | 0% |
|  | Sub-total | *0* | *0* | *0%* |
| Activity 4.2: Assist PWDs to prepare their application for enrolment in the 10 months vocational training in the textile industry. | Gov of Finland | 3,794.00 | 2,120.00 | 55% |
| Activity 4.3: Assist PWDs to be aware of the processes that will be adopted during the 10 month course. | Gov of Finland |
| Activity 4.4: Provide assistance to PWDs to prepare documents for possible new job opportunities | Gov of Finland |
| Activity 4.5: Recruit a specialist on social inclusion to establish working relationships with vocational educational entities and institutions who recruit PWDs and then provide this information to BDST to expand opportunities for PWDs | Gov of Finland | 4,300.00 | 0 | 0% |
| Activity 4.6: Organize final forum meetings demonstrate results and discuss lessons learned of the project. |  | 0 | 0 | 0% |
|  | Sub-total | *8,094.00* | *2,120.00* | ***13%*** |
| ProjectManagement | Project Manager, Project Assistant | Gov of Finland | 17,776.00 | 13,303.00 | 75% |
| Communication expenses and office supplies (Internet, translation, stationary, etc) | Gov of Finland | 832.00 | 832.00 | 100% |
| Supplies and equipment | Gov of Finland | 1,554.00 | 1,229.00 | 79% |
| Staff cost distribution for 6 months | Gov of FinlandUNDP | 8,000.00 | 1,720.00 | 22% |
| Project implementation costs (GMS - 8%) | Gov of Finland | 4,940.00 | 1,003.00 | 20% |
|  ISS | Gov of Finland | 3,000.00 | 102.00 | 3% |
|  |  | Sub-totai | *36, 102.00* | *18,189.00* | *50%* |
| TOTAL | *68,896.00* | *32,284.00* | *46%* |