



MINUTES

INAUGURAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING “Strengthening Services for Equal Participation and Inclusive Development” Project

07 July 2018, 14:00-15:00

SC Meeting Participants:

Mr. Dmitry Mariyasin	UNDP Resident Representative (Co-chair)
Ms. Tanja Radocaj	UNICEF Representative (Co-chair)
Ms. Mihaela Stojkoska	UNDP Deputy Resident Representative
Mr. Dmitry Ryakhovskiy	First Secretary, Embassy of the Russian Federation to RA
Ms. Tatevik Stepanyan	Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs
Mr. Vache Terteryan	Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure
Ms. Knar Ghonyan	Head of Public Health Department, Ministry of Health
Ms. Maya Simonyan	UNICEF, Child Development Specialist
Ms. Alvard Poghosyan	UNICEF, Education Officer
Ms. Kristina Hovhannisyan	Head of Department for Equal Opportunities, MLSA
Ms. Anna Hakobyan	Head of Disability Division, MLSA
Ms. Anahit Martirosyan	Head of International Relations Department, MLSA
Ms. Lusine Simonyan	Head of Territorial Administration Department, MTDA
Ms. Anahit Muradyan	Ministry of Education, Sports, Culture and Science
Ms. Maya Simonyan	UNICEF, Child Development Specialist
Ms. Alvard Poghosyan	UNICEF, Education Officer
Ms. Alla Bakunts	UNDP, DG Portfolio
Ms. Marina Malkhasyan	UNDP, Programme Manager
Ms. Goharine Avetyan	UNDP, Programme Associate

Purpose:

Presentation and revalidation of the key objectives of the RF funded “Stronger Services for Equal Participation and Inclusive Development” Project by the Steering Committee to kickstart the Project implementation.

Documents presented:

- Project Document;
- Key objectives and Results of the Project
- Agenda

Mr. Dmitry Mariyasin opened the meeting and welcomed the participants, informed that the Project was developed and conceptualized in 2019, now it is ready to launch. The Project will be financially managed by the Multi-partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) and implemented jointly by UNDP and UNICEF. This Project comes to build-up on what was achieved by the UNPRPD support to disability assessment reform, focusing on strengthening services in the regions, such as rehabilitation, habilitation, developmental, early identification, primary diagnostics, personal assistants, and others, primarily focusing on persons with disabilities as key vulnerable group. He noted that the key partners for this Project would be MLSA, MoH, MESCS and MTAI, as well as the regional administrations (marzpetarans). Mr. Mariyasin highlighted the importance of treating social protection and service provision issues as part of the integrated approach to strengthen the overall system of governance and having human rights based and user-driven approach in mind while planning, designing and implementing the Project. Mr. Mariyasin also noted that the Steering Committee aims to not only discuss and revalidate the Project objectives and expected results, but also the implications of COVID-19 and the new realities in the service sector, that the pandemic brings with it.

Ms. Tanja Radocaj noted that UNICEF together with UNDP have been supporting Disability Reform for the last 6 years and have marked significant results and policy level changes so far. And now it is time to go into more practical level, providing accessible services for children and adults, for them to have best quality of life. She outlined the importance of having appropriate, quality and accessible early identification and intervention, thus reducing or even eliminating the level of disability later in life. She also emphasized the need for the Project to be aware of new challenges due to Covid-19 and mitigate additional risks related to it.

Ms. Tatevik Stepanyan expressed deep gratitude to the partners contributing to the Project and reaffirmed the need for closer and stronger partnership. She outlined the vital importance of not making steps back in what refers to development of services, and

bringing them closer to communities and people as well as developing multidisciplinary and modernized approaches in habilitation, rehabilitation for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Mr. Dmitry Ryakhovskiy welcomed the SC members and expressed his support to the Project. He noted that the Project would be yet another important and strategic area of support from the Russian Federation to Armenia to overcome the difficulties caused by the pandemic.

Ms. Marine Malkhasyan and Ms. Maya Simonyan

- Presented in detail the project background, its design phase, aim and project components, duration and budget, key objectives and expected outcomes.
- Described future steps necessary to launch the project implementation.
- Presented implementation strategy and management framework.

Discussion:

- Mr. Terteryan emphasized the strategic importance of the Project. He noted the fact that the resources of the Project obviously would not suffice to cover all the marzes and communities and suggested choosing the “geolocations” very rigorously and focusing primarily on consolidated communities for targeted results. He noted that those communities can serve as platforms for piloting with consideration of successful experience with other projects.
- Ms. Tatevik Stepanyan prioritized importance of the needs assessment to serve for formulation of follow-up actions.
- Ms. Knar Ghonyan pointed to the need to adapt the Project activities to the realities of Covid-19. She informed that the MOH is currently considering providing drugs to chronic patients and those in self-isolation, as well as options to organize remote consultations. In this process, Ms. Ghonyan emphasized the importance of evidence to allow to choose the best model and to decide on investing potential resources to make the process of service delivery continue, strengthen human resource potential and raise public awareness.
- Mr. Mariyasyn supported the points highlighted by Ms. Ghonyan, noting that it is important to consider lessons learnt exposed by the pandemic for the service provision sector.
- Ms. Muradyan informed that Armenia is making a transition to universal inclusion and according to the law, all schools under general education will be based on the inclusive education model by 2025. Hence, the structural model of inclusive

education is ready; it implies further improvement of infrastructure and the capacities and services throughout Armenia, which will be done with support of regional pedagogical-psychological support centers. She highlighted the need to ensure proper coordination and clear distribution of functions among all entities involved.

Recommendations and Actions:

- The SC members endorsed the current scope of the Project including the objectives and results.
- The SC recommended to keep the initially agreed duration of the Project to three years, to ensure that the Project has three full years for implementation. With this, given the late start of six months, the SC suggested adding those six months to the end date of the Project and request the Donor (RF Government) to consider June 2023 as the Project end date.
- The project team will be in touch with the ministries under the leadership of MLSA to discuss the details for an updated Action Plan and activities for 2020 (the actions for the next six months of 2020 were presented and discussed at the SC meeting). And again, given the late start, the Project will have six months for implementation of activities for 2020 instead of initially planned one year. It was agreed that the activities will also reflect the COVID and post-COVID reality and impact of the pandemic on the most vulnerable populations, as well as on the service provision.
- An Advisory Group shall be established to include relevant government entities, civil society representatives and expert community to serve as platform for broader discussion with civil society and other stakeholders. The Advisory group will meet on a monthly basis.
- The SC agreed that a funds request will be sent to MPTFO to transfer the project programmable funds to UNDP and UNICEF respectively.



Dmitry Mariyasin
UNDP Resident Representative
14-Jul-2020



Tanja Radocaj
UNICEF Representative
17-Jul-2020