



PROJECT DOCUMENT
of the Republic of Azerbaijan

*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Project Title: Empowering and creating equal opportunities for vulnerable, conflict affected women in Azerbaijan to overcome barriers towards greater economic and social participation

Project Number: 00127436

Implementing Partner: State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs

Start Date: 8 November 2021 **End Date:** 31 December 2024 **PAC Meeting date:** 27 October 2021

Brief Description

Azerbaijan is a developing country with a GDP per capita of AZN 6,279 in 2021.¹ Although Azerbaijan's development achievements have been made possible by the oil boom, it also reflects a strong policy emphasis on social inclusion and sustainable development. The country has made progress across many dimensions of human development, however, there is a clear indication that women benefit less than men. While gender equality is enshrined in the national legislation, the body of research including the recent gender needs assessment of conflict affected areas points to significant structural and cultural barriers hindering women's full participation in the economic and social life of the country. Women, especially those residing in rural areas and affected by the conflict, tend to have less opportunities and choices compared to men, and more restrictions due to conservative gender norms.

The project's long term goal is to increase the resilience of conflict affected women to conflict and trauma. It aims to contribute to greater gender equality and realization of women's socio-economic rights by enabling rural women in conflict-affected areas of Azerbaijan to fully and equitably participate in the economic and social life of their communities, to bring changes to the social norms that govern gender relations and to stimulate transformation in local institutions strengthening their contribution to the economic regeneration and rural development. As a result of the project communities will be more resilient due to increased support to women in public life including in entrepreneurialism and decision making processes. Ultimately a strengthened WRC network would help shape more gender-sensitive policy and planning both at regional and national levels.

The project will aim to ensure that:

Outcome 1. Vulnerable women are empowered with skills and have access to services and information to improve livelihoods and deliver community-level benefits sustainably, by cooperating as part of the network of WRCs

Outcome 2. Stakeholders at national and local levels are supportive of WRC models and take actions to strengthen vulnerable women's economic and social inclusion through targeted interventions informed by stakeholder analysis produced by the project.

Contributing Outcome#1 (UNSDCF/CPD): People furthest behind participate in and benefit from a diverse and innovative economy encompassing future-oriented labour market transformation and access to decent work



Indicative Output(s) with gender marker²:

- 1.1 WRCs are well-established and sustainable, owned by the women themselves, and supported by the communities, engaging and empowering women beyond the life of the project.
- 1.2 New WRCs maintain a reflective culture, building on lessons learned from existing networks and sharing lessons that help improve the nationwide WRC network
- 1.3 Women have access to and use skills, networks, market/economic opportunities, advisory and support services to be self-employed and/or join the formal labour sector.
- 2.1 Engagement with local and national decision-makers and stakeholders raises awareness and builds support for the WRC approach to ensure programmatic sustainability.
- 2.2 Government and public institutions develop and deliver gender-responsive programmes and public services which are easily accessible by women and respond to their needs
- 2.3 Private sector partnerships are leveraged for stronger advocacy to counter job-related stereotypes, create female-friendly work-places, as well as enabling conducive business environment for women and foster gender-responsive corporate governance and institutional policies.

¹stat.gov.az/news/macroeconomy.php?page=1

Total resources required:	\$ 2,948,111	
Total resources allocated:		
	UNDP TRAC:	
	Donor:	\$ 2,948,111
	Government:	
	In-Kind:	
Unfunded:		

Agreed by:

State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs	UNDP
 Bahar Muradova Chairperson	 Charu Bist Resident Representative a.i.
Date:	Date:

I. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

The Republic of Azerbaijan with the population of around 10 million² is an upper middle-income country in UNDP's high human development category. The Government of Azerbaijan is seeking to transition the country towards more balanced, inclusive and sustainable economic growth. To facilitate the country's economic transition, the Government seeks to create conditions for development based on a growing non-oil economy with more opportunities for the private sector, fostering of entrepreneurship, investing in human capital, greater inclusion, sound environmental policies and regional development.

At the time of Azerbaijan's independence, the share of people living below the national poverty line was 49.0%.³

Key international indexes including Human Development Index, Global Competitiveness Index, World Bank Development Indicators, Doing Business studies, confirm that Azerbaijan has made significant improvements across many dimensions of human development. However, they also suggest that women, benefit less than men. For example, Azerbaijan's position on the UNDP's Gender Development Index score, measuring gender development gaps in human development, decreased between 2000 and 2020. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, which ranks 144 countries on gender parity across four thematic dimensions, Azerbaijan's rank fell from 86 in 2016 to 94 in 2020. This rank illustrates larger gaps in two dimensions compared with previous years (health and survival from 138 to 152, and political empowerment from 124 to 140), and improvements in the ranking on two dimensions: economic participation from 38 to 33, educational attainment from 83 to 60. On the World Bank's, Women Business Law Index 2021 Azerbaijan scores 78.8 out of 100 which is lower than the regional average observed of 83.4 across Europe and Central Asia. The reason for this low score is largely that Azerbaijan scores '0' on the 'Pay' indicator that measures whether the law mandates equal remuneration for work of equal value, and whether women can work the same night hours as men, in jobs deemed dangerous in the same way as men, and in the same industries as men.

The situational analysis of the project is also informed by the gender needs assessment carried out by UNDP at the project's inception phase. The assessment analysed women's economic autonomy and engagement in the three target regions – Barda, Agjabedi and Terter - through desk research, focus groups and key informant interviews. It found that whilst the overall legal environment is fairly good women's lives are restricted by social norms and practices. Women overwhelmingly expressed a desire to be more involved in public and entrepreneurial life but lacked self-belief, confidence, skills, and – crucially – capital. The gender needs assessment provided more than 24 recommendations – which have largely been integrated into the project approach. It stressed the need to incorporate women's employment issues in addition to looking at women-run businesses; address the decent work agenda; provide longer-term support to existing female entrepreneurs and encourage businesses that are 'green'. Extra investment was advised to build Women Resource Centres' (WRCs) skills and knowledge related to community organizing and facilitation, social work and trauma as well as gender-based violence. It was suggested that empowerment was integrated as a goal, and that a common overarching vision and strategy are developed for all WRCs. It put renewed emphasis on addressing restrictive social norms and practices, including through campaigns and the use of women role models and male champions of change. To ensure greater levels of community ownership and buy-in it was recommended that local WRC advisory boards are established. On the policy level there is still important advocacy work to be done in liaison with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs (SCFWCA) to improve the national strategic road maps through greater mainstreaming of women's economic issues; and also advocacy for legislative changes relating to paternity leave and equal pay for equal work is in progress under the discussion.

² UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, 2020

³ <https://unec.edu.az/application/uploads/2015/03/N3-2018.pdf>

Men who participated in the study sometimes unwelcomed the idea of women taking on non-traditional roles, but all interlocutors felt that women had valuable skills in agriculture and horticulture that should be built upon, and that investment in women would benefit rural areas generally. To avoid potential conflict, the men should be included and their opinion respected during the running of WRCs, and they should not feel as losing control – if, for example, women become empowered there are risks that other family members will react negatively. Therefore, the programme has been designed with the focus on women but with some additional elements to encourage (a) buy in from men and family members including through some relevant joint activities (b) dedicated activities for sharing information and increasing understanding by key males in the communities about the role of WRCs (c) inclusion of grants (or seed money) so that community members can see concrete changes in families' lives due to involvement by women in WRC activities.

The project regions have been affected by the 2020 conflict and by the earlier hostilities in and around the conflict affected regions; when they became host-communities for a large number of IDPs (up to 10% of the population) and suffered damage to homes and infrastructure. Following a series of assessments (on early recovery, gender and humanitarian mine action needs in conflict-affected areas), urgent priorities were identified, with a particular focus on immediate livelihood assistance and immediate support to the most vulnerable groups – women, families affected by the conflict and people with disabilities. There are still psycho-social and reconstruction issues in all these regions. In response to these, UNDP's early recovery support included the start of quick impact projects in April 2021 to help rehabilitate key local infrastructure based on community priorities and providing livelihood support

II. STRATEGY

Inclusive growth is a key driver for reducing vulnerability and building more resilience, particularly for the poor and most disadvantaged, many of whom live in rural areas. A principal source of vulnerability is limited income-generating opportunities combined with under-developed human capital. The project's long term goal is to increase the resilience of conflict affected women to conflict and trauma. It aims to contribute to greater gender equality and realization of women's socio-economic rights by enabling rural women in conflict-affected areas of Azerbaijan to fully and equitably participate in the economic and social life of their communities, to bring changes to the social norms that govern gender relations and to stimulate transformation in local institutions strengthening their contribution to the economic regeneration and rural development. As a result of the project communities will be more resilient due to increased support to women in public life including in entrepreneurialism and decision making processes. Ultimately a strengthened WRC network would help shape more gender-sensitive policy and planning both at regional and national levels.

Through building capacities of women, creating more equal opportunities and strengthening the enabling environment, the project reinforces especially the recovery and relief pillar of Women, Peace and Security, where conflict affected women become agents of change to participate in the economic and social lives of their communities after the conflict. As a platform for change, WRCs will be utilised to advance gender equality in these communities with women and for women. Increasing financial literacy of women and endorsing them for social change through tailored capacity building is complemented with strong formal and informal support networks. Ultimately the project aims to achieve economic security of conflict affected women so they are better prepared for external shocks of conflict and crises.

At the outcome level, the project will aim to ensure that:

Outcome 1. Vulnerable women are empowered with skills and have access to services and information to improve livelihoods and deliver community-level benefits sustainably, by cooperating as part of the network of WRCs

Outcome 2. Stakeholders at national and local levels are supportive of WRC models and take actions to strengthen vulnerable women's economic and social inclusion through targeted interventions informed by stakeholder analysis produced by the project.

The interventions proposed under Outcome 1 seek to address women's immediate needs and constraints such as restricted access to public spaces, lack of access to information, knowledge and services, inadequate entrepreneurial and professional skills. The main platform for addressing these needs and delivering demand-driven capacity building programmes and essential services will be the Women Resource Centres. This model has proven itself to be a successful way to secure sustainable, local level change as demonstrated by existing UNDP programming to support a wider network of 9 WRCs and 3 Community Development HUBs that are already based in government buildings and providing services to rural women as a result of an effective partnership built between the government and the donors. This project will extend that model by supporting the establishment of WRCs in the three target regions (Barda – as a stand-alone office, Agjabedi and Terter as a spinoff of the existing Community Development HUBs); roll-out of programmes to enhance women's entrepreneurial activity, employability and career choices, and launch of business mentoring, para-legal counselling, psychological support and other services, based on evidenced needs from the research of where support can lead to transformative change for the most vulnerable women in these communities. The project will enable to capture and build on lessons learnt from the existing stand-alone WRCs and consolidate the entire 'WRCs portfolio' of 14 WRCs (including 9 WRCs already established by UNDP in other parts of the country, 3 WRCs to be established under the current project and 2 WRCs planned to be established under other components of the UNDP programme) and transform it into a sustainable women-driven network able to influence organizational culture, contribute to greater institutional mainstreaming and promote attitudinal change. Therefore, building women's networks can have long-term benefits not only on gender-sensitive service delivery but also on women's inclusion in decisions which impact them so that they eventually benefit from (and are not disadvantaged by) economic revival. The project will also support the UNDP to analyse sustainability options for the WRCs network, propose *modus operandi* and build WRCs managerial, advocacy, networking and fund-raising capacities.

The selected three regions share similar characteristics besides geography and sources of income. All three are closely located to the former Line of Contact (LOC), have been affected by the first and second wave of the hostilities and have been accommodating temporarily displaced people (IDPs). Additional to building women's confidence through upskilling, it is necessary to acknowledge both the long-term and recent traumas faced particularly by IDPs whose living conditions are dire, and the creeping trauma suffered by whole communities living near the former LOC for many years. Furthermore, these regions share similar cultural patterns identified as barriers to women's economic and social autonomy. Therefore, there is a great need to increase the economic and social independence of women in these regions.

The interventions under Outcome 2 will aim to use the learning, analysis and demonstration of how to support vulnerable women in these affected communities to engage with stakeholders and decision-makers at local and national level to advocate for the reform of public service delivery mechanisms to make them more gender-responsive; leverage partnerships between the WRCs network to turn them into a reliable interface between women in need and public service providers, engage different forms of groups i.e. NGOs, associations, unions, grassroots, volunteer groups, mobile support groups established on the basis of the WRCs in decision making processes and mobilize the private and financial sectors to counter cultural stereotypes regarding traditional men's and women's jobs and provide opportunities to support the effective delivery of the WRCs beyond the project time-frame.

Theory of change

The logic of the project is that conflict affected women in the project's regions are economically excluded primarily due to cultural and social norms. However, if a significant number of successful

women are seen by communities to be engaged in business then a tipping point can be reached and certain barriers against women's participation in economic activities reduces. The strength of overall discriminatory beliefs and behaviours also reduces, which then encourages more women to engage in economic activities outside of the home including non-traditional business or professional occupations.

Marginalised women are by definition particularly disadvantaged on numerous overlapping fronts and they require intensive tailored support, training and skills building to enable them to overcome these multiple disadvantages. Women can be born marginalised (such as by coming from a poor family, being born with a disability) or they can become marginalised such as due to the loss of a husband, a divorce, having to care for sick children or family members long-term, or due to mental health problems such as caused by violence and trauma (both inside and outside the home). However, by being female all are subject to unequal treatment which limits their confidence, their self-belief and their options. It is necessary therefore to create a more enabling environment for women by mobilizing powerful men and institutions in this process of transformation – including through raising their voices in support of women's increased inclusion and breaking the conventional wisdom that women's place is primarily in the home.

The building of solidarity and professional networks for WRC members can significantly strengthen women's position in a sustainable way by enabling them to connect to other women similar to themselves (usually women are only allowed to socialise with family members at weddings etc.) and develop contacts who can support them practically and emotionally. The vehicle to drive this change is a service which women feel belongs to them, which they can turn to without fear of discrimination for practical advice, support and training so they can develop as persons and as economic actors. By establishing a WRC as a membership organization, the ordinary rural women can become part of a body that represents their needs and interests and one that is able to systematically access institutions and resources to make lasting changes. As all women are time poor it is essential that a WRC initially has dedicated paid staff to manage support, bring in trainers and capacity builders, and provide referrals. By being part of a national network and linking with the SCFWCA the WRCs can further build on their practical learning and more effectively advocate for national legal and policy level changes.

The project's theory of change therefore identifies restrictive social norms as the main cause of insufficient participation and unequal gains by rural women in economic development and social activism. Increased public participation can be achieved by overcoming gender stereotypes and negative attitudes towards women and supporting women's access to resources and opportunities for services that take into account education, employment, networking and gender aspects.

The logic follows that if women are empowered within value chains then women's "entrepreneurial potential" will be "unleashed," creating more sustainable business and "helping families and communities prosper" (Coca-Cola, 2012). It is argued that women can provide routes out of poverty not just for themselves but for families, communities, and even nations (World Bank, 2011). At the same time women's success will lead to greater support for their public roles and diminish stereotypes.

The project's logic stems from the UNDP lessons learnt in the course of implementing the women empowerment project portfolio and will use the already tested approaches and models, such as Women Resource Centre (WRC) platform. This programme initiated by UNDP in 2011 has enhanced women's economic and social participation by providing them access to opportunities and services through WRCs. The WRC has become a scalable model extended to 9 regions to help rural women overcome barriers to economic empowerment including lack of skills, restrictions in accessing public places as well as cultural stereotypes and strong social pressure that disadvantages women and excludes them from public life.

The evaluation of the 'WRCs project portfolio' confirmed the effectiveness of the WRC model as a "platform for women to obtain information, knowledge and skills necessary to overcome barriers to

equal participation in the economic and social life". Feedback gathered within the scope of the evaluation was strong in confirming "the Centres' role in empowering women to take more proactive approach and become self-confident, which is the single most appreciated new state of mind that women reported to have received." The evaluation also confirmed that this strategy has yielded results going beyond increasing skills and supporting the businesses towards building women's social capital and empowering them to take steps in exercising their rights. Women who benefitted from the project describe it as a "life-changing move that made them feel more empowered to stand for their rights, take more proactive role in their family and in their community." This in turn has enabled women to employ strategies which reduce their exposure to GBV, withstand social prejudices and become recognised as productive members of the family and community.

Given that (a) there is a successfully tested model for increasing women's economic inclusion – Women Resource Centre, and b) adequate legal frameworks are in place that provide women with economic and social rights, and assuming that (a) government will continue to prioritize gender equality, (b) maintain enabling business climate and (c) provide space for social activism, and (d) continue institutional reforms in the public sector, the project will bring a transformational change in the following ways:

- by scaling-up the WRCs that provide access to business skills, knowledge, networks, resources and public space, women will become more economically and socially active, financially independent, self-confident and thus, will gain more control over their lives and choices;
- by consolidating WRCs and turning them into a women-owned and women-driven network nationwide, women will have a stronger voice and clout to influence policy agenda and advocate for reforms;
- by promoting women's economic and social activism, the project will counter gender stereotypes and restrictive practices that currently confine women to their traditional gender roles;
- by galvanizing institutional reform in public service delivery, the project will create sustainable mechanisms that are gender-responsive and tailor-made to address women's specific needs, especially for vulnerable and socially excluded women;
- by leveraging private sector partnerships, the project will sensitize private employers to women needs, encourage women taking non-traditional jobs, broaden women's career choices and increase investment available to women-owned businesses.

The Theory of Change assumes:

- State services including information about and opportunities for entrepreneurialism and decent paid work should be accessible by all men and women including those in rural and conflict affected communities.
- National and regional government programmes should be informed by the realities of all members of the communities they potentially impact.
- Economic and entrepreneurial activity should be forward looking, build resilient communities and reduce reliance on carbon-based futures.
- Transformation of discriminatory gender norms and behaviors is necessary to ensure communities' ability to adapt to pressing environmental and economic changes.
- Women require dedicated support, guidance and upskilling to enable their access to services and opportunities and to more fully participate in public life.
- Women whose social or other status means they are discriminated against require more affirmative actions over a longer time to support their integration into economic life.
- In addition, there are assumptions listed separately in the results framework – that the current enabling environment will be maintained, that there is continuing support by stakeholders such as family members, communities, the government and the private sector; continuing participation by women; and a conducive environment for women's small business.

The principles for transformation are as follows:

- Rural communities are specific and their varied contexts will be taken into account.
- Women's economic empowerment requires individual, family, social and political change.
- Social transformation requires multiple investments in institutions, people and processes over time.
- Affirmative actions for disadvantaged women are essential.
- Interventions will be grounded in the needs and realities of disadvantaged women.
- Resilience is sustained through locally grown, women-led organizations and networks.
- Empowering women is both a means to community stability and resilience and an end in itself.

The project supports dual-track approach to **gender-sensitive SDG implementation** by contributing to the following SDGs:

SDG 5: Gender Equality – the project seeks to ensure women's full and effective community participation and equal opportunities for realization of their economic and economic rights.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth – the project is designed to boost women's capacities to contribute to the economic development of their communities and achieve higher levels of economic productivity through building their capacities, developing effective networking, diversified professional paths and offering a voice in advocating their economic interests.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities – the project strives to address the inequalities in employment between rural and urban areas; inequalities in decent jobs opportunities and access to services for men and women, and income inequalities.

III. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Expected Results

Outcome 1. will be achieved through the delivery of the following outputs:

Output 1.1 WRCs are well-established and sustainable, owned by the women themselves, and supported by the communities, engaging and empowering women beyond the life of the project.

WRCs support vulnerable women with new skills and build on existing knowledge to support livelihoods and to play an active role in supporting each other through the WRC, equipping them with the confidence, skills and motivation to sustain the WRC beyond the project. The scope of work under this output will involve introducing the idea of WRCs and getting buy-in from the local stakeholders (executive committees, municipalities, communities, and local opinion-makers); identifying and equipping premises for the WRCs; mobilizing women activists and soliciting their insights on WRCs operation; recruiting and training WRC staff (in organizational management, ethics, gender and trauma) and designing an action plan for WRC activity. It will include the establishment of local NGO with a governing body in the form of an advisory Board for each WRC. Successful business women, women change agents, female representatives of local branches of agricultural and business associations; as well female stakeholders and beneficiaries will become members of the NGO and will be actively involved in participatory design, monitoring and evaluation. Community conversations and other tools for outreach will be used to publicise activities, and to ensure they continue to be tailored to needs and to strengthen community support for the WRC.

UNDP will facilitate external and local experts, as well as RC members to provide sustainable training and development to build capacity and empower vulnerable women, including in hard-to-reach areas. Specifically, the project output will support development and delivery of trainings programmes in business development, and help women start businesses and obtain legal status of individual entrepreneur for greater social protection. It will also address women's employment issues for women who do not wish to set up businesses. Men will be directly engaged so that families together are supported to make business plans that acknowledge women's unpaid work burden and encourage collaboration in home-based tasks and a more equitable control of family income and benefits. Besides, the project will also offer trainings in professional skills (basic professional skills, digital literacy, accounting) short-term vocational courses and capacity building programmes recommended by the baseline assessment (including for displaced women and rural women) such as psycho-social self-help groups and upskilling agricultural and horticultural skills. Restrictive gender and social norms will be addressed with targeted activities and campaigns. The use of male 'champions of change' and female 'role models' will be encouraged.

Indicative activities:

- 1.1.1 Conduct meetings with local stakeholder to introduce the idea of WRCs and getting buy-in from the local stakeholders
- 1.1.2 Identify local community activists and engage them to support the set-up and operation of the WRCs
- 1.1.3 Identify and equip premises for WRC in Barda (in Agjabedi and Terter the premises of the Community Resource Hub will be used but with careful scheduling so there are times when it will be a woman-only space), recruit staff
- 1.1.4 Conduct trainings for WRCs staff in basics of organizational management and organizational development, strategic planning and project management, ethics, gender and trauma
- 1.1.5 Develop WRCs annual action plans with participation of WRC members
- 1.1.6 Design and deliver business development trainings
- 1.1.7 Devise frameworks, processes and tools to ensure adaptive ongoing monitoring of the WRCs
- 1.1.8 Provide awards (possibly in-kind) for best business proposals as incentives
- 1.1.9 Design and deliver trainings in professional skills, communications, in accounting and digital literacy
- 1.1.10 Organize short-term vocational courses and ad hoc, tailor-made capacity building programmes
- 1.1.11 Support establishment of psycho-social self-help groups consisting of the WRC members, building their capacity to coordinate related activities.
- 1.1.12 Organize introduction to basic concepts around gender, gender equality, women's rights for WRC staff and members to raise their understanding and motivation
- 1.1.13 Conduct awareness raising campaigns and identification of male 'champions of change' and female 'role models' to encourage adoption of positive gender equal social norms.

Output 1.2. New WRCs maintain a reflective culture, building on lessons learned from existing networks and sharing lessons that help improve the nationwide WRC network

UNDP will facilitate a network of WRCs to share experience and best practice, forge connections and draw increasingly on local support, reducing reliance on external inputs. Under this output, the project will seek to capture and analyse lessons learnt from the existing WRCs as well as international experiences and best practices in establishing and managing similar women empowerment platforms. The design of this component will be guided by an analysis of WRC sustainability options and *modus operandi* that the project will carry out for the **entire WRC network**. The indicative list of sustainability options includes: i) turning WRCs into a non-profit non-governmental organization relying on traditional donor funding; ii) equipping WRC activists and members with a specific set of skills (e.g. community data collection specialist); iii) introducing WRC members to the concept and models of social purpose enterprise iv) developing a network of volunteers and encouraging in-kind support from community members. This will help the WRCs have a robust strategy and capacities to transform into a self-sustained women-driven network. The project will also facilitate a series of networking meetings between WRC members and with

similar women-led platforms in other countries (remotely and/or in reality). The project will support the upgrade of an online Resource Hub that serves as a digital platform to host all knowledge products (training manuals, recorded webinars, guidelines, studies, reports, video materials etc.) produced for the entire duration of the UNDP WRC programme. A sustainability plan for WRCs will be developed in the beginning of the project implementation and analysis will be undertaken periodically, to refine the actions and revise the plan on an annual basis.

Indicative activities:

1.2.1 Conduct an analysis of sustainability options and modus operandi for the entire WRC network; produce report and recommendations on the structure, mechanism, resources and related activities for modus operandi.

1.2.2 Develop a sustainability plan at the project initiation phase, conduct its analysis periodically (once per year), produce report and provide recommendations for revision of activities

1.2.3 Deliver NGO establishment, management and fund-raising training to WRCs staff and activists. Facilitate NGO registration and obtain legal status of WRCs

1.2.4 Deliver training to WRC coordinators, advisory board and activists in leadership and confidence-building

1.2.5 Select interested women activists and train WRCs members as community data specialists

1.2.6 Design and deliver training in Basics of Social Enterprise set-up and management

1.2.7 Bi-annually organize system-wide WRCs networking meetings to ensure capturing and review of lessons learnt, as well as exchange and application across the wider UNDP WRC network

1.2.8 Facilitate WRC activists' participation in local and international professional and other networks and women-led platforms

1.2.9 Establish, periodically upgrade and maintain an online Knowledge Hub. Develop appropriate filing system and coordinate the process of resource gathering.

Output 1.3. Women have access to and use skills, networks, market/economic opportunities, advisory and support services to be self-employed and/or join the formal labour sector.

The gender needs assessment in 2021, showed that the most vulnerable rural women will predominantly be looking for employment in the agricultural sector and therefore an additional market opportunity analysis and assessment for business will be undertaken in the three regions with an agriculture/horticulture focus also looking at jobs which contribute to building a non-oil sustainable economy – in the 5 'Rs': refuse, recycling, reuse, (environmental and community) regeneration and rewilding.

The gender assessment found that the biggest constraints on women's employment and business involvement (aside from lack of capital) are gender norms and stereotypes and so advocacy will also take place with men and other family members to increase their support of women working outside the home and for sharing in household chores usually considered to be 'women's work'.

It is important the capacity building programmes are under-pinned by advisory services that will help women to tackle multiple barriers in daily life. Under this component, WRCs will offer a package of essential services that will include:

i) business advice for women entrepreneurs and women seeking to start their businesses. The services will include advice on legal issues, product branding, packaging, access to markets. The business consultant will also help women entrepreneurs to link to ABAD (agency supporting family business) for registration and consequent support for value chain activities.

ii) advisory services for girls and young women on career/employment choices;

iii) para-legal advice on the topics most relevant to women such as: ownership of land and homes, family and divorce, early and forced marriage, domestic violence, sexual harassment, inequality and discrimination in the work place;

iv) psycho-social support for women affected by stressful and traumatic situations (including the 2020 conflict, displacement, coercion, harassment, violence) as an enabling factor to boost women's confidence and increase their resilience for domestic and external shocks to prepare them psychologically for active participation in the community life.

and

v) advice and support in financial planning, budgeting, application for credit, and banking. This element might include work with family decision makers in order to strengthen support and understanding of those who potentially can support or block women's greater engagement in business activities (fathers, brothers, husbands and parents-in-law).

vi) referrals to services for women to existing state provided services and benefits

Indicative activities:

1.3.1 Conduct market opportunity analysis and assessment for business in three regions with an agriculture/horticulture focus also looking at jobs which contribute to building a non-oil sustainable economy, exploring business ideas to support the sustainable green economy e.g. businesses using recycled materials. Deliver reports and recommendations and revise WRC action plan according to recommendations

1.3.2 Organize business advisory services in the field of legal structure, business related reporting and tax eligibility requirements, marketing, branding, sales, certification and licensing

1.3.3 Organize advisory services to support financial planning, budgeting, application for credit, and banking

1.3.4 Build partnership with ABAD to link potential women run and family businesses to their existing networking platform

1.3.5 Organize advisory services for girls and young women on career choices and facilitate their link with potential employers

1.3.6 Group women per service categories and recruit related legal advisors and/or lawyers. Organize legal consultancy hours for women in: ownership of land and homes, eligibility to alimony after divorce; family and divorce, early and forced marriage, domestic violence, sexual harassment, inequality and discrimination in the work place

1.3.7 Organize psychological counselling sessions for women and family members affected by stressful and traumatic situations (including the 2020 conflict, displacement, coercion, harassment, violence)

1.3.8 Facilitate information sessions and individual consultations on state provided social aid, benefits, pensions and child support

Outcome 2. will be achieved through the delivery of the following outputs:

Output 2.1 Engagement with local and national decision-makers and stakeholders raises awareness and builds support for the WRC approach to ensure programmatic sustainability.

Under this output, UNDP engagement will ensure sustainability of the WRCs beyond the project lifetime for the new WRCs and the wider WRC network. UNDP will facilitate various forms of partnership building between the WRCs and local and national stakeholders. WRCs nationwide will amplify the voice of vulnerable women, presenting women's real issues and analysis to policy making organs and advisory bodies such as the SCFWCA, the Ministry of Economy, and other Ministries to further gender mainstreaming.

This will include UNDP sensitizing national stakeholders about the role and importance of supporting WRCs; advocating for inclusion of the WRCs members into discussions on the strategic policy frameworks to make them more gender-responsive; facilitating dialogue and

cooperation between the WRCs and parts of the national gender machinery; encouraging national stakeholders to share their knowledge and capacities with the WRCs; and WRCs to share their knowledge of how to support women at work and increase mainstreaming in national policies and plans with national stakeholders.

The kinds of issues that will be covered are related to peace, security and reconstruction, ultimately depending on the concerns of the women. They might include development of jobs and incomes for women in communities; refinement of vocational trainings and other schemes already underway in municipalities; prioritisation of investment; IDP concerns; advocacy for improved environmental protection; issues around post-conflict planning and benefits etc.

Indicative activities:

2.1.1 Stakeholders analysis and mapping

2.1.2. Design a road map for strategic advocacy from each WRC to highlight changes required in national and local policy and plans relating to women, the economy, MSMEs and the environment.

2.1.3. Meetings with national and local stakeholders to sensitize them to the WRCs needs and WRC's to report on achievements and challenges

2.1.4 Support participation of the WRCs members in national and/or local level strategic discussions (e.g. New Vision concept note, sectoral roadmaps etc.)

2.1.5 Organize meetings of the WRCs coordinators/members with Gender Focal Points to identify entry points for cooperation

2.1.6 Facilitate round table discussion with participation of the state authorities on challenges faced by women and present plan of actions on the elimination of challenges.

2.1.7 In collaboration with the ILO and in coalition with the local NGOs to advocate on revision of types of jobs and professions banned to women in the Labor Code

Output 2.2. Government and public institutions develop and deliver gender-responsive programmes and public services. Services are easily accessible by women and respond to their needs

Engagement and advocacy with stakeholders (utilising analysis and demonstration of solutions through the WRCs) leads to better services and policy / wider stakeholder involvement to support women through and outside of the WRCs. For this output, the project will carry out gender-sensitive organizational analysis of selected public agencies, to identify opportunities for better targeting and service delivery to women. An indicative list of agencies includes ASAN (one-stop shop for public service delivery), DOST (one stop shop for social services), ABAD (agency supporting family business), Agency for SME support. The organizational analysis will review operating procedures and workflows and generate recommendations to strengthen delivery of gender-responsive services and/or introduce new service lines, as well as define the role of WRCs and its members in accelerating/improving the change (e.g. WRCs being an interface between ASAN centres and women survivors of domestic violence). Besides, the component will build staff capacities of the selected agencies on gender-sensitive service delivery and support implementation of the selected recommendations of the analysis. Activities under the output will be further elaborated during project reviews.

Indicative activities:

2.2.1 Carry out Gender-sensitive organizational analysis among three selected government agencies at the central and/or local levels. Produce report and conduct event introducing the results of the analysis. Select recommendations (generated by the organizational analysis) for strengthening gender sensitivity of the current service delivery, advocate for implementation of the recommended actions and assess results

2.2.2 Arrange meetings/round tables between WRCs and public service providers to share achievements, best practices and brainstorm/agree potential points for cooperation and transformation

2.2.3 Provide trainings to build staff capacities on gender-sensitive service delivery in three public agencies

Output 2.3. Private sector partnerships are leveraged for stronger advocacy to counter job-related stereotypes, create female-friendly work-places, as well as enabling conducive business environment for women and foster gender-responsive corporate governance and institutional policies.

The findings of the assessment suggest that household dynamics, personal and professional limitations, inadequate corporate reinforcements, lack of community support, social norms and behaviours are among barriers that prevent active economic participation of vulnerable women in the target regions. The situation analysis recognizes that gender norms and stereotypes represent significant barriers limiting women's educational and professional choices. Lasting success of the project is dependent on the change of perceptions with regards to men's and women's traditional work and with regards to women's role in public and business life. To trigger attitudinal change with regard to the gender segregation of jobs, the project will engage with private sector companies to employ women in non-traditional jobs and WRCs to jointly launch an advocacy campaign countering job-related stereotypes. The project will train a group of women who can serve as role models in communication and advocacy skills, to turn them into 'champions' able to propel the change forward. A team of women champions and private employers will be supported to organize a series of advocacy events targeting local communities, schoolchildren and youth, parents, teachers, public and private employers. The advocacy events are expected to stimulate public debate and trigger policy action to ensure equality of life choices for men and women.

Indicative activities:

2.3.1 Organize training in advocacy and communication for WRCs activists.

2.3.2 Establish a team of women champions and private employers and support them in organizing a series of advocacy events

2.3.3 Arrange meetings with the private sector to sensitize them to women's specific needs, how to establish female friendly work-places and to stimulate women's employment in non-traditional jobs

2.3.4 Develop and implement a joint awareness campaign and lead the process of public debate to counter stereotypes of 'women's' work and 'men's' work.

Resources Required to Achieve the Expected Results

It is expected that the project will procure the following main types of goods and services, which constitute an essential part and contribute towards the implementation of planned activities:

1. Office stationery and supplies (planned for Project Team and effective operations of the WRC's)
2. Equipment and furniture (goods and supplies for in-kind contributions to support establishment of startup businesses))
3. IT and communication equipment (planned for the establishment of the WRC in Barda, as well as equipment need for the effective operation of the Project team)
4. Utilities (WRC office location related costs)
5. Technical expertise and consultancies (to contribute and support implementation of activities)
6. Training services (service providers in the required fields – advisory, physiological, usually in an individual form)
7. Publishing services (planned for the visibility and building project intellectual property)
8. Rent of premises and equipment for project events
9. Catering services (planned for the live trainings when over 2 hours)
10. Rent of vehicle (project team field visits for monitoring purposes)
11. Rent of project office (placement of office location for project team)

The total cost of resources required to achieve the expected results is estimated at US\$ 2,948,111.

Partnerships

State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs (SCFWCA) implementing and regulating state policy on family, women, and children's affairs, and a network of gender focal persons in key agencies to oversee the mainstreaming of gender equality into state laws, policies, and programmes. The SCFWCA will be the main Government counterpart in the implementation of the project. The Committee will ensure national ownership of the project, facilitate access to the project's target areas, coordinate activities with other government entities and local authorities to ensure synergies and avoid duplication. The Committee will also play a critical role in sustaining and upscaling project results including through advocacy and lobbying.

Regional and local entities (executive power and municipalities) are natural counterparts for the project as activities will take place in the regions of Azerbaijan, and their buy-in and long-term commitment are essential for the success of the project and its sustainability. The local authorities are the main source of knowledge on the local economic and investment situation and have convening power necessary to ensure participation of local opinion-makers and community activists. As such, they are evident partners for mobilization of communities, provision of inputs into assessments, selection of target groups and beneficiaries and organization of project events.

Agency for the Development of SMEs under the Ministry of Economy is an important partner for the project actions related to women's participation in business activities. Agency representatives will be invited to be part of the project network, to sensitize them to women's needs, discuss ways to boost growth of women-led businesses, and establish close links between the Agency and WRCs to last beyond the project's lifetime. The project will also advocate for integration of women's perspectives into the Agency's policies and services including training, consulting, information, financial and others. Having the Agency as the project's ally will serve the immediate purpose of supporting women entrepreneurs nurtured through the project as well as the longer-term objective of changing gender dynamics in the entrepreneurial and economic landscape.

State Committee for Refugees and IDPs is mandated to regulate the issues related to refugees and internally displaced persons, including humanitarian aid, accommodation, social protection, rehabilitation and re-integration, improvement of living conditions in the de-occupied regions territories and increasing employability. The Committee will play an important role in providing data and information on the IDPs population in the target regions, providing insights on the specific needs of women IDPs, facilitating access to IDPs settlements, arranging project events with involvement of women IDPs.

Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population and DOST agency (the agency for sustainable and social security - providing social services such as employment, retraining, social security, disability and other social benefits) are other important stakeholders of the project. The Ministry will be a source of information on the local labour market, potential provider of the vocational courses for women, and a source of expertise for the WRCs' members to advocate for and access services for socially vulnerable groups.

ASAN Service based in Barda, one of the project's target regions, will also be engaged in the project activities, as a source of knowledge and expertise helping the WRCs support women's access to available services and potential opportunities. ASAN service" centers are "one-stop-shop" based locations that bring together representatives of 10 government entities and private companies providing services in a public-private partnership. More than 300 services are provided, including birth, death and marriage registration; identity cards; passports; driver licenses; real

estate records; immigrant status. At the same time, functional support services, including banking, insurance, legal support, translation are rendered at the center.⁴

Risks and Assumptions

The major project risks are listed below:

- The project's success may be jeopardised by overly restrictive family, and conservative social norms that may prevent women from accessing or using WRC services; sustainability of women-run businesses; sustainability of WRCs; and mobility restrictions and their consequences in the times of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Initially, the idea of WRCs may be new to the communities, and some women may lack trust and be reluctant to refer to the WRC in the beginning. Women may be hesitant to use WRC services due to the overly restrictive family or other social norms. An appropriate mitigation strategy would be to clearly explain the activities and benefits of the WRCs for women and organize meetings with women members of the existing WRCs to demonstrate advantages of joining the WRC network.
- Men and family members might prevent engagement by some women in activities. This will be mitigated by reaching out to community leaders to encourage their vocal support of the projects. Additionally, some elements of the project will engage with men such as all family budgeting sessions; and male 'champions of change' will be identified and utilised.
- The gender needs assessment found that women are time poor as they have numerous obligations to fulfil on a daily basis. The less educated women have obligations according to agricultural calendars – which require their concentrated involvement in the fields for planting, weeding and gathering crops. Therefore, activities are being designed according to women's time limitations and other obligations.
- Women-run businesses may face sustainability challenges in the long run. As a countermeasure, the project team and consultants will closely review commercial viability of business plans, regularly monitor the status of the businesses, propose corrective action, link to advisory support, offer networking opportunities, facilitate access to additional financial sources.
- Any new waves of Covid-19 may pose risks to the project implementation due to mobility restrictions. The project will seek to reduce the risk and use IT and other technologies to deliver online trainings, webinars and other services/products, as well as provide opportunity for women to obtain IT skills and use of digital technologies. The project will also support provision of internet connections costs to the project beneficiaries for efficient use of an online resources and access to online events. This approach has been successfully applied in similar UNDP-implemented projects since the start of the pandemic.

Detailed Risk Analysis is presented in Annex 3.

Stakeholder Engagement

The project's intended beneficiaries are:

- Vulnerable women in the three target regions of Barda, Agjabedi and Terter including displaced women, rural women, under-educated women, widows, young married women with children, women from low-income families, unemployed women and job seekers, women heads of households, women with disabilities. They will benefit from capacity building measures, support to business development, greater employability, social networks and personal empowerment;

⁴ <https://www.asan.gov.az>

- Female population at large will benefit from gender-responsive service delivery, greater sensitivity to gender needs on the part of the public and private sector and gradual shift in patriarchal mindsets;
- Local communities and society at large will benefit from more educated and active community members;
- Government will benefit from improved capacities to provide gender-sensitive services and smoother interaction with the private and financial sectors in addressing women's needs;
- Local economy and businesses will benefit from greater entrepreneurialism, better educated female workforce and new businesses started by women.
- NGOs, grassroots, non-state actors will benefit from the greater civic activism and engagement of individual or groups of women.

Knowledge

The project will produce a series of knowledge products such as booklets, toolkits, training course materials on a wide array of subjects (e.g. business development, organizational management, digital literacy, accounting, NGO management, social entrepreneurship etc.) All knowledge resources will be stored in the Resource Hub and will be easily accessible to the project beneficiaries.

All communication materials and activities will acknowledge UK's support to the project. All visual materials produced by the project will carry logos of the UK Government and UNDP.

Sustainability and Scaling Up

Sustainability of the project results will be secured through the following strategies:

- Building a shared vision and feeling of ownership among women that is critical to WRC becoming an integral part of the community. The idea of WRC belonging to women, not to the project, will be emphasized throughout all meetings, trainings, workshops, and other events, and will be supported by the establishment of the LNGO with a governing body in the form of the Board;
- Building managerial capacities of the WRCs staff, facilitating registration of the WRCs as non-profit non-governmental organizations and publicizing their role and activities among government actors, donors, non-government players;
- Helping WRCs to develop a system-wide robust sustainability strategy with a diverse menu of options including financial sustainability (traditional fund-raising, service delivery, social purpose enterprise);
- Maintaining regular dialogue with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs, other national and local authorities to secure on-going institutional support to the WRCs upon project completion;
- Agreeing on strong commitment towards project results and developing action plans with the SCFWCA
- Connecting WRCs to other professional networks (including abroad) that can support them upon project completion;
- Building capacities of women (WRC members and project beneficiaries) to become role models and advocates for attitudinal change;
- Mobilizing active women trained by the project for delivery of services to other women on the basis of the WRCs to ensure continuity of learning beyond the project end date;

- Engaging with the public agencies to reform the service delivery mechanisms to be more-gender responsive to better meet women's needs upon project completion;
- Sensitizing the private sector to women's needs and partnering with private companies for stronger advocacy.
- Developing sustainability plans for the project's three-year end.

IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

The project's programmatic and operational effectiveness and cost-efficiency is secured through the following means:

- The project's design is informed by the assessment and independent evaluations of similar interventions in Azerbaijan as well as review of international good practices and lessons learnt in countries in similar contexts, and a gender assessment of the target regions.
- The project will apply well - tested methodology for business development skills; it will use the readily available UNDP training toolkit on starting up businesses developed on the basis of best international practices;
- UNDP will use a portfolio management approach to ensure cost effectiveness by leveraging activities and partnerships with other UNDP-led initiatives/projects pursuing similar objectives, namely *Economic Empowerment for Entrepreneurship and Employment; Women's Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus; Economic and Social Empowerment of Rural Women and Youth; Creating Inclusive and Decent Jobs for Socially Vulnerable Groups; Support to women-led community-based initiatives; and Addressing GBV/DV through comprehensive community effort.*
- The project will gain financial efficiency by using office and events spaces provided at no costs by the state authorities and project stakeholders; UNDP's intellectual property (manuals, training modules and presentations, videos and resource libraries) will be used by the project;
- The project will also draw from the UNDP's experience of administering similar past and ongoing projects promoting women's economic participation. To ensure cost-efficiency and effectiveness, the project management approach will take into account best practices and lessons learned from the establishment and operation of the WRCs in other nine regions;
- To the extent feasible, the project will use the capacities of the project team and WRCs coordinators from the 9 WRC's and active members to participate and support delivery of certain activities
- The project will promote the principle of environmental sustainability into the economic activity. It will support generation of 'green jobs' such are organic farming and environment-friendly businesses;
- The project will gain cost-efficiency at the operational level by applying best-value-for-money principle in all procurement actions, and using, where available, UNDP's corporate long-term agreements with vendors for delivery of goods and services.

Project Management

The project office will be based in Baku. The activities under Outcome 1 will be implemented in Barda, Agjabedi and Terter through the WRCs and Community Development Hubs, while the activities under the Outcome 2 will take place both at the local and nationwide level.

The overall project oversight will be ensured by a UNDP Programme Officer to be assigned to the project. The cost of the Programme Officer will be fully recovered through the Direct Project Costing arrangement. Operational support to the project management will be provided by a full-time Project Finance Assistant and UNDP Operations Unit, including HR Associate, Finance Associate and Procurement Associate.

The project is subject to the audit in line with UNDP policies and procedures.

V. RESULTS FRAMEWORK (SEE ANNEX 5)

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following monitoring and evaluation plans:

Monitoring Plan

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners (if joint)	Cost (if any)
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.	Quarterly, or in the frequency required for each indicator.	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.		
Monitor and Manage Risk	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Quarterly	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.		
Learn	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.	At least annually	Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions.		
Annual Project Quality Assurance	The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the project.	Annually	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.		
Review and Make Course Corrections	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	At least annually	Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.		
Project Report	A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders.	Annually, and at the end of the			

	consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary, an updated risk long with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.	project (final report)		
Project Review (Project Board)	The project's governance mechanism (i.e., project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. In the project's final year, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.	At least annually	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.	

Evaluation Plans⁵

Evaluation Title	Partners (if joint)	Related Strategic Plan Output	UNSDCF/CPD Outcome	Planned Completion Date	Key Evaluation Stakeholders	Cost and Source of Funding
Final Project Evaluation	n/a	1.1.2 Marginalised groups, particularly the poor, women livelihoods and jobs, people with disabilities and displaced are empowered to	People furthest behind participate in and benefit from a diverse and innovative economy encompassing future-oriented labour market transformation and access to decent	September 2024	SCFWCA, British Embassy	Cost: US\$ 28,000 Source: UK Government

⁵ Optional, if needed

				work	gain universal access to basic services and non-financial assets to build productive capacities and benefit from sustainable				
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VII. MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN ⁶⁷

The Multi-Year Work Plan is attached in the excel format.

⁶ Cost definitions and classifications for programme and development effectiveness costs to be charged to the project are defined in the Executive Board decision DP/2010/32

⁷ Changes to a project budget affecting the scope (outputs), completion date, or total estimated project costs require a formal budget revision that must be signed by the project board. In other cases, the UNDP programme manager alone may sign the revision provided the other signatories have no objection. This procedure may be applied for example when the purpose of the revision is only to re-phase activities among years.

VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The project will be nationally implemented by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs (SCFWCA). Implementation support will be provided by the UNDP Country Office that will act as responsible party. In its capacity as Implementing Partner, SCFWCA will ensure overall project management and coordination with other relevant national and local authorities. Besides, SCFWCA will be responsible for the facilitation of all project activities. UNDP will provide support and services including procurement and contracting in accordance with the relevant UNDP Rules and Procedures for procurement and human resources management and RBM guidelines.

The project will have a governance structure, aligned with UNDP's rules for Results Based Management (see Figure: Project Governance Arrangements below).

Project Board. The Project Board will be the national decision-making body responsible for making by consensus executive management decisions for a project when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including approval of project plans and revisions. It will be responsible for reviewing and updating the project risk log, issue log, lessons learned log and the project monitoring schedule plan. In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, the Project Board decisions should be made in accordance to standards that shall ensure management for development results, best value money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition.

The Project Board contains three roles:

- The Executive (Implementing Partner) will convene the Project Board meetings. This position will be held by the National Project Director, who will be the representative of SCFWCA;
- The Senior Supplier: This position will be held by the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, or a designated UNDP Development Advisor. British Embassy may also join, as deemed necessary;
- The Senior Beneficiary: This position will be held by the representative(s) of the SCFWCA.

The Project Board will meet at least once a year to review the project progress and address any problems that may arise in implementation. The meetings of the Project Board will also be a space to propose and adopt changes to the project's implementation plan wherever such changes are deemed feasible.

Management Arrangements

Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The PIU will be staffed with the following project personnel:

Project Manager will be recruited and tasked with the day-to-day management of project activities and will have the authority to run the project on behalf of the Project Board within the constraints laid down by the Board. The Project Manager will be responsible for meeting UNDP obligations under the project and will perform a liaison role with the Government, donors, project beneficiaries and other project partners. His/her duties and responsibilities will be the following: to prepare annual work plan of the project and monitor progress against the approved work plan; monitor events and update the workplan as required; manage and monitor the project risks; capture lessons learned during project implementation; perform regular progress reporting to the project board; prepare the annual and final progress reports, and submit the report to the project board. Project Manager will coordinate day-to-day project management and achievement of the project milestones, being responsible for drafting and ensuring adherence to the project work plan; mobilizing personnel, goods and services, to initiate project activities; ensuring adequate information flow, discussions and feedback among the various stakeholders and target groups; guiding the work of experts and sub-contractors and ensure the timely execution of their assignments; organizing project events; drafting progress reports; managing the transfer of project

assets and files to national beneficiaries; ensuring visibility of project activities and results and other substantive and organizational tasks.

Project Officer will provide essential support to the Project Manager in day-to-day project management and achievement of the project milestones. He/she will be responsible for drafting and ensuring adherence to the project work plan; supporting mobilization personnel, goods and services, to initiate project activities; ensuring adequate information flow, coordinating discussions and feedback among the various stakeholders and target groups; guiding the work of experts and sub-contractors and ensure the timely execution of their assignments; helping with organizing project events and drafting progress reports.

Project Finance Assistant will ensure financial management of the project including disbursements, preparation of multi-year project budget and budget revisions; follow-up on purchase orders and payment requests; preparation and submission of mid-term and final financial reports. Finance assistant will also be responsible for all administrative matters such as procurement, contracting, organizational/logistical matters, travel, file maintenance, preparation of routine correspondence, record-keeping, preparation of requests for direct payment, and providing data for drafting financial reports.

Communication Specialist (part-time) will support the Project Manager in designing and implementing Communication and Visibility plans. Under the guidance of the Project Manager, the Communication Specialist will draft and ensure implementation of the gender sensitive and women's equality aware Communication and Visibility Plan, ensure production of promotion materials for external public, support organization of various public events on local and national level in order to achieve better Project understanding, recognition and visibility, provide updates on the project's progress for the website and social media and perform other tasks that may be required by the Communication Plan. He/she will be responsible for ensuring compliance with UNDP and UK public disclosure policies; supporting development of the Resource Hub, and any other tasks that may be required.

Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (part-time) will be hired as to support the PMU in designing Results Framework, expanding Risk Register, implementing the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan. There will be a review meeting together with PMU at the end of the first quarter of implementation to agree the revised RF, MEL plan and Risk Register. The MEL Specialist will be in charge of collecting and analysing data for assessing progress toward the project's targets and milestones, providing contributions to the progress reports, coordinating organization of the evaluation and case study exercises and contributing to project learning. He/she will make field visits and spotchecks; document lessons learned; identify, analyze and report best practices; organize the independent evaluation, and provide inputs into the regular donor reports.

Project Assurance. UNDP will designate a Programme Analyst to provide independent project oversight and monitoring functions, to ensure that project activities are managed and milestones accomplished. The UNDP Programme Analyst will be responsible for reviewing Risk, Issues and Lessons Learned logs, and ensuring compliance with the Monitoring Schedule Plan.

Project Support. UNDP will provide financial and administrative support to the project including procurement, contracting, travel and payments.

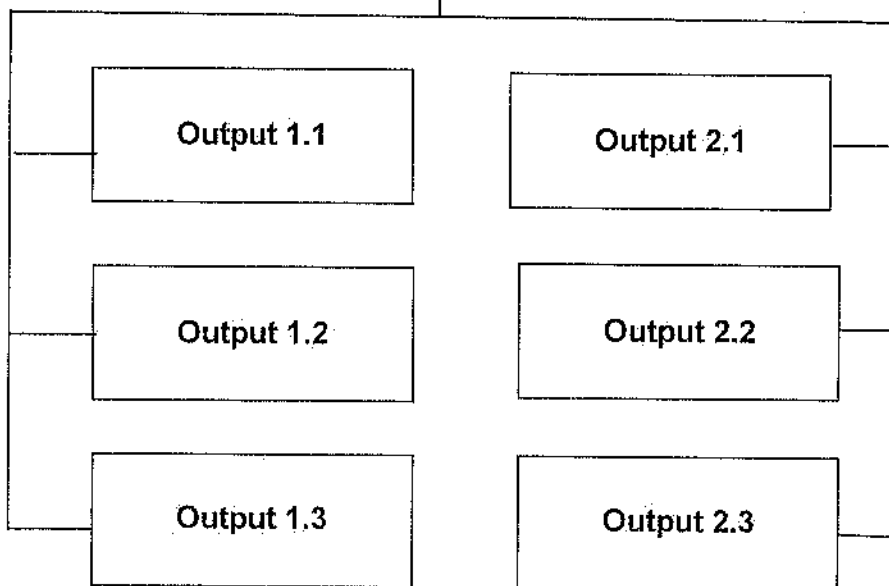
Project Organisation Structure

Project Board (Governance Mechanism)		
Senior Beneficiary SCFWCA	Executive SCFWCA	Senior Supplier UNDP, British Embassy

**Project Assurance
UNDP Programme
Analyst**

**Project Manager
Project Officer
Communication Specialist
Project Finance Assistant**

Project Support



IX. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and UNDP, signed on 6 January 2001. All references in the SBAA to “Executing Agency” shall be deemed to refer to “Implementing Partner.”

This project will be implemented by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs (“Implementing Partner”), with UNDP providing support services in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures, to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition.

X. RISK MANAGEMENT

1. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA [*or the Supplemental Provisions to the Project Document*], the responsibility for the safety and security of the Implementing Partner and its personnel and property, and of UNDP’s property in the Implementing Partner’s custody, rests with the Implementing Partner. To this end, the Implementing Partner shall:
 - a) put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
 - b) assume all risks and liabilities related to the Implementing Partner’s security, and the full implementation of the security plan.
2. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the Implementing Partner’s obligations under this Project Document.
3. The Implementing Partner agrees to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml.
4. The Implementing Partner acknowledges and agrees that UNDP will not tolerate sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse of anyone by the Implementing Partner, and each of its responsible parties, their respective sub-recipients and other entities involved in Project implementation, either as contractors or subcontractors and their personnel, and any individuals performing services for them under the Project Document.
 - (a) In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to above, shall comply with the standards of conduct set forth in the Secretary General’s Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 of 9 October 2003, concerning “Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse” (“SEA”).
 - (b) Moreover, and without limitation to the application of other regulations, rules, policies and procedures bearing upon the performance of the activities under this Project Document, in the implementation of activities, the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to above, shall not engage in any form of sexual harassment (“SH”). SH is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to

cause offense or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

5. a) In the performance of the activities under this Project Document, the Implementing Partner shall (with respect to its own activities), and shall require from its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 (with respect to their activities) that they, have minimum standards and procedures in place, or a plan to develop and/or improve such standards and procedures in order to be able to take effective preventive and investigative action. These should include: policies on sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse; policies on whistleblowing/protection against retaliation; and complaints, disciplinary and investigative mechanisms. In line with this, the Implementing Partner will and will require that such sub-parties will take all appropriate measures to:
 - i. Prevent its employees, agents or any other persons engaged to perform any services under this Project Document, from engaging in SH or SEA;
 - ii. Offer employees and associated personnel training on prevention and response to SH and SEA, where the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 have not put in place its own training regarding the prevention of SH and SEA, the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties may use the training material available at UNDP;
 - iii. Report and monitor allegations of SH and SEA of which the Implementing Partner and its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 have been informed or have otherwise become aware, and status thereof;
 - iv. Refer victims/survivors of SH and SEA to safe and confidential victim assistance; and
 - v. Promptly and confidentially record and investigate any allegations credible enough to warrant an investigation of SH or SEA. The Implementing Partner shall advise UNDP of any such allegations received and investigations being conducted by itself or any of its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4 with respect to their activities under the Project Document, and shall keep UNDP informed during the investigation by it or any of such sub-parties, to the extent that such notification (i) does not jeopardize the conduct of the investigation, including but not limited to the safety or security of persons, and/or (ii) is not in contravention of any laws applicable to it. Following the investigation, the Implementing Partner shall advise UNDP of any actions taken by it or any of the other entities further to the investigation.
 - b) The Implementing Partner shall establish that it has complied with the foregoing, to the satisfaction of UNDP, when requested by UNDP or any party acting on its behalf to provide such confirmation. Failure of the Implementing Partner, and each of its sub-parties referred to in paragraph 4, to comply of the foregoing, as determined by UNDP, shall be considered grounds for suspension or termination of the Project.
6. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (<http://www.undp.org/ses>) and related Accountability Mechanism (<http://www.undp.org/secu-srm>).
 7. The Implementing Partner shall: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.

8. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.
9. The Implementing Partner will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud or corruption, by its officials, consultants, responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or using UNDP funds. The Implementing Partner will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.
10. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to the Implementing Partner: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and (b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. The Implementing Partner agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at www.undp.org.
11. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP has the obligation to conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP projects and programmes in accordance with UNDP's regulations, rules, policies and procedures. The Implementing Partner shall provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to the Implementing Partner's (and its consultants', responsible parties', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with the Implementing Partner to find a solution.
12. The signatories to this Project Document will promptly inform one another in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud or corruption with due confidentiality.

Where the Implementing Partner becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, the Implementing Partner will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). The Implementing Partner shall provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

13. The Implementing Partner agrees that, where applicable, donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities which are the subject of this Project Document, may seek recourse to the Implementing Partner for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

Note: The term "Project Document" as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients.

14. Each contract issued by the Implementing Partner in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from the Implementing Partner shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.
15. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all

individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.

16. The Implementing Partner shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled "Risk Management" are passed on to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and that all the clauses under this section entitled "Risk Management Standard Clauses" are included, *mutatis mutandis*, in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

XI. ANNEXES

- 1. Project Quality Assurance Report (online)**
- 2. Social and Environmental Screening Template (attached as a separate file)**
- 3. Risk Analysis**
- 4. Project Board Terms of Reference and TORs of key management positions**
- 5. Results Framework**

Annex 3. Risk Analysis

#	Description	Risk category	Impact & Likelihood = Risk Level ⁸	Risk treatment/mitigation measures	Risk owner
1	Initially, the idea of WRCs may be new to the communities in the target regions, and some women may lack trust and be reluctant to refer to the WRC in the beginning. Women may be hesitant to use WRC services due to the overly restrictive family, or other social norms.	Social Environmental	I = 4 P = 3 Risk level: Substantial	The appropriate mitigation strategy would be to clearly explain the benefits of the WRCs for women and organize meetings with women champions who are members of the existing WRCs to demonstrate advantages of joining the WRC network and share their experiences and successes. Awareness raising events will be held in communities and municipalities, active women of the communities will be attracted to the projects, who will support women engagement and networking	Project Manager
2	Vulnerable women are hard to reach and cannot engage fully in activities due to heavy demand on their time	Social Environmental	I = 4 P = 3 Risk level: Substantial	UNDP will tailor trainings to suit women's needs and arrange mobile activities to enable women to engage in rural areas.	Project Manager
3	Backlash by men and families in communities to work of WRCs	Social Environmental	I = 4 P = 3 Risk level: Substantial	UNDP will engage with men and key stakeholders in the communities to gain understanding and acceptance, the project team will ensure women's equal participation and independent decision-making opportunities	Project Manager
4	WRCs are not fully owned by communities	Operational	I = 4 P = 3 Risk level: Substantial	Establishment of LINGO with a governing body (Board) for each WRC consisting of local women leaders, business heads and beneficiaries	Project Manager
5	Registration of the WRCs may be a lengthy procedure with many administrative	Operational	I = 4 P = 3	UNDP will seek all avenues to facilitate the registration process with the Government such as regular follow-up, advocacy, support	Project Manager

⁸ The scale is 1 to 5.

	and legal barriers and may last longer than planned, and hinder sustainability strategy.		Risk level: Substantial	letters etc.	
6	Women-run businesses may face sustainability challenges in the mid- and long run.	Operational	I = 4 P = 2 Risk level: Moderate	As a countermeasure, the project team and consultants will closely review commercial viability of business plans, regularly monitor the status of the businesses, propose corrective action, link to advisory support, offer networking opportunities, facilitate access to additional financial sources, such as credits and micro-loans. UNDP will engage with Ministries preparing economic plans to encourage gender integration	Project Manager
7	The Covid-19 new wave may pose risks to the project implementation due to restricted mobility during the state of quarantine.	Operational	I = 4 P = 3 Risk level: Substantial	In case travel bans from Baku to regions and/or between the regions are put in force, UNDP will use IT and other alternative or innovative technologies to deliver online trainings, webinars and other services. This approach has been successfully tested in similar UNDP-implemented projects since the start of the pandemic. It will require extra resources, such as additional services in the use of digital technologies, access to internet connections, access to information and available health related materials, when working with vulnerable women who might not have IT skills or equipment.	Project Manager
8	Low level of interest from the local private sector in project activities	Operational	I = 3 P = 3 Risk level: Moderate	The mitigation strategy will be to sensitize private sector, to conduct joint events where women activists and WRC beneficiaries can share their successes, as well as private sector partners from similar projects can share their experience with the project and	Project Manager

9	Project strategy challenges	Sustainability may face	Operational	I = 4 P = 3 Risk level: Substantial	talk about benefits gained. The project will design sustainability framework upon analysis of WRC sustainability options and modus operandi that the project will carry out for the entire WRC network.	Project Manager
10	Challenges in management procurement of materials for in-kind contributions	financial and	Financial	I = 4 P = 3 Risk level: Substantial	UNDP's financial management and procurements rules and regulations will be applied and regularly UNDP's Operations Unit will monitor and assess risks and implement corrective actions if needed	Project Manager

Annex 4. Terms of Reference

Project Board

Overall responsibilities: The Project Board is the group responsible for making by consensus management decisions for a project when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendation for UNDP/Implementing Partner approval of project plans and revisions. In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, Project Board decisions should be made in accordance to standards that shall ensure best value to money, fairness, integrity transparency and effective international competition. In case a consensus cannot be reached, final decision shall rest with the UNDP Programme Manager. Project reviews by this group are made at designated decision points during the running of a project, or as necessary when raised by the Project Manager. This group is consulted by the Project Manager for decisions when PM tolerances (normally in terms of time and budget) have been exceeded.

Based on the approved annual work plan (AWP), the Project Board may review and approve project quarterly plans when required and authorizes any major deviation from these agreed quarterly plans. It is the authority that signs off the completion of each quarterly plan as well as authorizes the start of the next quarterly plan. It ensures that required resources are committed and arbitrates on any conflicts within the project or negotiates a solution to any problems between the project and external bodies. In addition, it approves the appointment and responsibilities of the Project Manager and any delegation of its Project Assurance responsibilities.

Composition and organization: This group contains three roles, including:

- 1) An Executive: individual representing the project ownership to chair the group.
- 2) Senior Supplier: individual or group representing the interests of the parties concerned which provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project. The Senior Supplier's primary function within the Board is to provide guidance regarding the technical feasibility of the project.
- 3) Senior Beneficiary: individual or group of individuals representing the interests of those who will ultimately benefit from the project. The Senior Beneficiary's primary function within the Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries.

Potential members of the Project Board are reviewed and recommended for approval during the LPAC meeting.

Specific responsibilities:

Defining a project

- i. Agrees on project manager's responsibilities, as well as the responsibilities of the other key members of the project management team;
- ii. Delegates any project assurance function as appropriate;
- iii. Reviews the progress report for the initiation stage (if an initiation plan was approved);
- iv. Reviews and appraises detailed project plans, including the multiyear workplan and Atlas reports covering activity definition, an updated risk log and the monitoring schedule plan; and
- v. Shares annual reports and relevant information on achievement of the outcomes with the programme board and outcome group.

Running a project

- i. Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints;
- ii. Address project issues as raised by the project manager;
- iii. Provide guidance on new project risks, and agree on possible countermeasures and management actions to address specific risks;
- iv. Agree on project manager's tolerances as required;
- v. Review the project progress, and provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans;
- vi. Review combined delivery reports prior to certification by the implementing partner;
- vii. Appraise the project annual review report, including the quality assessment rating report; make recommendations for the workplan; and inform the outcome group about the results of the review;
- viii. Provide ad hoc direction and advice for exceptional situations when the project manager's tolerances are exceeded; and
- ix. Assess and decide to proceed on project changes through appropriate revisions.

Closing a project

- i. Assure that all project deliverables have been produced satisfactorily;
- ii. Review and endorse the final project review report, including lessons learned;
- iii. Review financial reports, including the final combined delivery report prior to certification and signature;
- iv. Make recommendations for follow-up actions to be submitted to the outcome group and programme board; and
- v. Notify the outcome group and programme board of the operational completion of the project.

Project Manager

Overall responsibilities: The Project Manager (PM) will report to the UNDP Azerbaijan Programme Officer (or other duly designated UNDP officer) for all of the project's substantive and administrative issues. The PM will report on a quarterly basis to the Project Board. The PM will be responsible for meeting UNDP obligations under the project and will perform a liaison role with the Government, donors, NGOs and other project partners.

Specific responsibilities:

Running a project

- I. Plan the activities of the project and monitor progress against the approved workplan;
- II. Mobilize personnel, goods and services, training and micro-capital grants to initiate activities, including drafting terms of reference and work specifications, and overseeing all contractors' work;
- III. Monitor events as determined in the project monitoring schedule plan, and update the plan as required;
- IV. Manage requests for the provision of financial resources by UNDP, through advance of funds, direct payments or reimbursement using the fund authorization and certificate of expenditures;
- V. Monitor financial resources and accounting to ensure the accuracy and reliability of financial reports;
- VI. Be responsible for preparing and submitting financial reports to UNDP on a quarterly basis;
- VII. Manage and monitor the project risks initially identified and submit new risks to the project board for consideration and decision on possible actions if required; update the status of these risks by maintaining the project risks log;
- VIII. Capture lessons learned during project implementation; a lessons learned log can be used;
- IX. Perform regular progress reporting to the project board as agreed with the board;
- X. Prepare the annual review report, and submit the report to the project board and the outcome group;
- XI. Prepare the annual workplan for the following year, as well as quarterly plans if required; and
- XII. Update the Atlas Project Management module if external access is made available.

Closing a project

- i. Prepare final project review reports to be submitted to the project board and the outcome board;
- ii. Prepare final lessons learned report, identify follow-up actions and submit them for consideration to the project board;
- iii. Manage the transfer of project assets and files to national beneficiaries;
- iv. Prepare the final financial report to be certified by the implementing partner and submit the report to UNDP; and
- v. Support the UNDP programme manager in the commissioning, management and use of evaluation, including the preparation of a management response and implementation of committed actions (if delegated).

Project Officer

Overall responsibilities: The Project Officer (PO) will report to the Project Manager for all the project's substantive and administrative issues such as procurement, contracting and logistics. He/she will be responsible for day-to-day management of the project, mobilization of the project inputs and ensuring project deliverables in accordance with the workplan.

Specific responsibilities:

Running a project

- I. Plan the activities of the project and monitor progress against the approved workplan;
- II. Monitor events as determined in the project monitoring schedule plan, and update the plan as required;
- III. Mobilize personnel, goods and services, training and micro-capital grants to initiate activities, including drafting terms of reference and work specifications, overseeing all contractors' work and ensuring the timely execution of their assignments;
- IV. Maintain project records, draft routine correspondence and ensure adequate information flow between project partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries;
- V. Organize project trainings, meetings, stakeholder consultations and other project events;
- VI. Be responsible for financial management including disbursements, record-keeping, cash management, preparation of payment requests and compilation of financial reports.
- VII. Ensure visibility of project activities and results;
- VIII. Support PM in monitoring risk log and capturing lessons learnt in the project implementation;
- IX. Draft the regular and annual review report, and submit the report to the PM for review;
- X. Prepare the annual workplan for the following year, as well as quarterly plans if required; and
- XI. Update the Atlas Project Management module if external access is made available.

Closing a project

- vi. Prepare initial draft project review reports to be submitted to the PM;
- vii. Contribute to the final lessons learned report, identify follow-up actions and submit them for consideration to PM;
- viii. Manage the transfer of project assets and files to national beneficiaries;
- ix. Prepare initial draft financial report for review of the PM; and
- x. Support the PM in the commissioning, management and use of evaluation, including the preparation of a management response and implementation of committed actions (if delegated).